

PAGES FROM AN ADVENTUROUS LIFE

By "DICK DONOVAN"
(J. E. PRESTON MUDDOCK)





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FROM A PAINTING BY EDWIN A. WARD.

R. W. Emerson

PAGES FROM AN ADVENTUROUS LIFE

BY

“DICK DONOVAN”

(J. E. PRESTON MUDDOCK)



WITH THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS

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*With fraternal regard, and a
whole-hearted love for the
dear old Club, I dedicate this
book to my Brother Savages*

Foreword

I HAVE, in the following pages, written a good deal about myself, and a little about those I have known—that little, in most cases, with sadness and pain. Few of us, alas! can look back over the road we have travelled without regrets and sighs; for we cannot close our eyes to the green mounds and white gravestones which tell of dear companions who, having journeyed with us some of the way, fell out of the race, and passed into the shadows. I have helped to lay so many friends to rest, and have so frequently parted in love and affection from those I was destined to meet no more, that my heart has been often bruised. In youth and early manhood one makes friends, but as they die off their places remain empty. To write of the comrades with whom you have marched, laughed, and sometimes wept, but who are now nothing more than a memory, is a painful task, and I confess, nor am I ashamed of the weakness, that at times my eyes have grown dim and my pen has faltered.

Having outlived most of my near relatives, and being the sole survivor of my particular branch of the family, there are moments when I feel as if I were living in a world of shades.

In this story of myself I have purposely adopted a somewhat discursive style, nor have I followed events in strict chronological order. A stiff, conventional narrative form did not, somehow, recommend itself to me. I have done little more than refer to my childhood. From both

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parents I inherited, and displayed it early, the desire to move on—the Wanderlust, as the Germans call it. There was sea salt in my blood; and nature spoke to me in a voice that I well understood. Never shall I forget the feeling of elation I experienced when as a mere boy I sailed away to India, just before the outbreak of the terrible Mutiny, where I remained for three years, and such experiences as I had I record them. But let it not be supposed for a moment that I have attempted to add anything to what is already known of those dark years, or even to write a footnote to history. I have done no more than jot down my impressions—the impressions of a boy, be it understood. I was conscious of the electricity in the atmosphere, of the tension, of the something that might happen; but I was far from the actual storm zone. I only heard the rumbling of the thunder, saw nothing of the lightning, and had no hair-breadth escapes or thrilling adventures of any consequence. Had I been a few years older, I might have done something. As it was, I was a beardless youngster, and as a high-spirited boy felt aggrieved because I had to lead the life of a boy. However, my youth was not my fault. The one thing I am thankful for is that I was trained in a hard school during my Indian experiences, and it developed in me the sense of self-dependence, as well as the love of freedom, which has made it difficult for me ever since to take kindly to the restrictions of civilisation in the purely conventional sense. The vast ocean, the desert sands, the dark jungle, the weird bush, have lured me with a syren call that I could never resist. I have had yearnings, too, that would not be suppressed; the inborn love of books has attracted me to literary centres and literary people; and I have been impelled by irrepressible instincts to incline

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towards that mysterious region where intellectual Bohemia was to be found. Shamelessly I acknowledge a preference for intellect in rags rather than for dull, staid, smug respectability in broadcloth.

With a temperament and disposition such as the foregoing confession reveals, it is obvious that my career was bound to run a somewhat erratic course, and in that fact, perhaps, may be found such interest as the book possesses. Within me there has always burned an energy which has prevented me from being idle. I have been forced to find a physical and mental outlet for it. The rust of inactivity has certainly never affected me.

In the following pages I have dealt in detail with the Savage Club, with which it has been my proud privilege to be associated for upwards of thirty years. Thirty years in human affairs is a long period, and in my case I have seen men come and go—men who have written their names in something more stable than sand. The Savage Club therefore, is closely connected with part of my life, and I could hardly have written my memoirs without reference to many of my brother Savages, living and dead.

For myself, the day wears apace. I have supped my full of life, I have warmed both hands at its fire, and the evening is closing in. But when the time comes to depart hence, I shall be able to turn my face to the wall conscious of having striven, according to my lights, to do what I considered I was called upon to do with all my heart and all my soul. The best of us can do no more than that.

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I

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THAT eccentric and lovable Bohemian, Mortimer Collins, summed up the philosophy of life in an epigram quite equal to that uttered by Disraeli's Sidonia: "Youth is prophecy, manhood a fruition, old age a vision of both past and future."

To the man who fully realises that the shadows are lengthening and his sands running low, the past must certainly appear as a confused vision. To look back over the course one has been traversing for upwards of sixty years is to fall into a frame of mind which, despite all one's philosophy, cannot fail to beget a sense of sadness. For how can we shut out the vision of white gravestones which mark the spots where sleep those with whom we have laughed and sung and sorrowed? A dumb, inarticulate cry rings like a wail through our being:

"O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!"

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The penalty of a full life is this obtruding memory of the dear dead ones who, as they passed into the night, took from us a little of the joy of living. Youth finds its pleasure in the to-day, it snaps its fingers at the to-morrow; it revels and romps and tramps with its companions, it builds castles in the air, it knows nothing of the smell of the mould. But age, alas! has only the recollections of yesterday, while the future is—Dust! The track of my existence has been a peculiarly sinuous one, and in its early stages may be traced under the burning skies of India during the lurid days of the Great Revolt, when a handful of Britain's sons held their own against stupendous odds; then it winds over many seas and through strange lands, often far beyond the fringe of civilisation. As it has fallen to my lot to know many countries, so I have come in contact with all sorts and conditions of men; my experiences have been varied, and occasionally not without excitement.

On my mother's side I am a descendant of that branch of the Preston family known as "the proud Prestons of Preston." Many of my maternal kinsfolk were prominently associated with Lancashire, more particularly with that hive of industry—Manchester; in numerous instances they were servants of the Honourable East India Company, and won distinction as sailors and fighting men. Their bones bleach under many skies, or lie fathoms deep in dark waters. My father was a seafaring man, but was intended for the law, my paternal grandfather being a member of a very old firm of family lawyers. My father disliked

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law, however, so ran away to sea, and made several voyages in East Indiamen. He was still young when he married my mother, but had seen much and travelled far. I was not born until twelve years after the marriage. Two sisters had preceded me. One of them was destined to die before she had reached the age of twenty, after undergoing a terrible operation. Poor dear! My birthplace was a quaint old house on the borders of the New Forest, within a few miles of Southampton. In the entrance hall the broad staircase, with its oak balustrade, was lighted at the top of the first flight of stairs by a large stained-glass window, which threw its prismatic colours on the floor of polished oak, and on the carven, grotesque features and form of a rampant griffin, with its forepaws clasping a heraldic shield. This griffin was supported by the massive terminal pillar of the balustrade, and it seemed from its fixed wooden stare to be ever gazing into futurity. The uncouth figure of the griffin exercised a peculiar fascination over my childish mind, and I would sit for hours on a wooden stool, my chin resting on my hands, gazing at it, spellbound and motionless. I have an idea that I used to dream out romances, in all of which that uncouth griffin figured. I have distinct recollections, too, of wanderings, in company with my sisters and a faithful old nurse, in the depths of the Forest, where we acquired a smattering of woodland lore, and I developed the love for Nature and freedom which has always been so strong within me. Occasionally, too, we were taken to the house of a relative who resided near Netley, and nothing

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delighted me more than to be allowed to visit the ruins of the once magnificent Abbey. At that time a strange, little old woman used to haunt the ruins. No doubt she was a poor, harmless creature who went there to gather faggots or herbs; but we children, although we had none of the timidity or fear peculiar to most children, regarded her with something like awe. We knew her to be a witch endowed with supernatural powers, and I am certain that I believed it was her custom to ride through the air on a broomstick. As we generally took luncheon with us on these visits to the Abbey, the witch came in for a share of it. She professed to be very fond of us, and found delight in amusing us with weird stories about witches, fairies, and giants. One day she studied the palm of my small hand very intently, and said I was destined to cross many seas and wander through many lands, and oftentimes be in danger. This prophetic statement, which was several times repeated, came true, and I have never forgotten the little old woman and her prophecy.

In these early years of my existence my father's visits to his family were few and brief, as his duties kept him much at sea. But he was a devoted and loving parent, who did everything he could to promote the happiness of his children. His coming home was always a red-letter day, as he invariably came laden with presents. My present was generally a model of a boat or ship, for I had a passionate love for anything associated with the sea, and nothing delighted me so much as the model of a vessel with

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rigging and yards. When I was about eight years of age he sailed away for India, and it was understood that his absence would not extend beyond nine or ten months. We children, including my youngest sister, who was nearly two years my junior, together with our mother and our nurse, waved him an affectionate adieu as the vessel moved slowly from the dock. Strangely enough, with the exception of myself, his family were never to see his dear face again. The ship he was returning in broke down in the Bay of Bengal, and had to put back to Calcutta, from whence she had started. On examination it was found that the necessary repairs would take several months to complete, and my father was notified that he would be put on half pay during the time the vessel was laid up. This angered him, and he resigned, but was immediately offered a lucrative appointment on the China station subject to his signing for three years. This he did, little dreaming that it was to separate him for ever from his loved ones. Shortly afterwards, too, the failure of an unlimited bank in which he was a depositor and shareholder swept away his small fortune, and that militated against his return. Then a shattering blow fell upon my poor mother. Our beautiful house had to be sold, and faithful old servants discharged. For some reason or another I had been taken away days before by a relative to a curious old house, situated at a place called Hamble, and there I had two little adventures. There was a tiny harbour used principally by fishing boats, I fancy.

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Finding a plank floating in the water, I promptly seated myself straddle-legged on it, without even taking off my shoes and socks, and paddled forth towards the entrance of the dock ; but as my knowledge of the management of such a primitive craft was nil, it and I quickly parted company, and I was floundering about in the muddy water. My career would have been cut short at that early stage had not a fisherman, observing the mishap, hastened to my rescue, and hoisted me out with a boat-hook. I was none the worse for the ducking, and a day or two later on was the hero of adventure number two. In the garden of the house where I was staying was a tall tree, and in the topmost branches of that tree a crow's nest which I determined to investigate. Up that tree I went ; it was slow and painful toil, and my bare legs suffered, as I had not at that stage been promoted to the dignity of trousers. I was resolved, however, to accomplish my purpose, but when within reaching distance of the nest the branch I was clinging to broke, and I was hurtled earthward, until suddenly brought up with a round turn, owing to my clothes being caught by a stumpy branch which stuck out like a peg from the main trunk. In that undignified position I dangled between earth and heaven ; for a space of months, as it seemed to me, as a matter of fact, about ten minutes, until I attracted the attention of an old female servant who was hanging out clothes in the orchard. " Lors a mussy me," she exclaimed, as she rushed as fast as her old legs would carry her to the house, " if there ain't that

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young varmint a-hooked up in the tree!" In course of time there came two labouring men, and partly by means of a ladder, and partly by climbing, reached me, and took me off the peg. But as soon as I was released I made my way down the tree unaided. The old servant, who had watched the operation breathlessly, said as soon as I reached terra firma: "You've come nigh drownding of yerself, and a-hanging of yerself: I wonder what mischief you'll be getting into next? You'll be coming to a bad end as sure as eggs is eggs if you ain't more careful." In the course of a week I left Hamble with my relative, who was an architect engaged in constructing some buildings in the village. We travelled by the stage-coach, and occupied seats outside. It was a moonlight night, I remember. On reaching Southampton I was transferred to a chaise, and driven to the house of my uncle, where, to my astonishment, I found my mother and sisters. The blow had fallen, and our old home was ours no longer. I was too young to understand the full meaning of the sorrow, and when my dear mother told me that we were all going to Manchester, where we had lots of aunts, uncles, and cousins, my small heart swelled with joy, for the desire to travel was already making itself felt. And yet I was grieved at the thought of leaving the place of my childhood. I had some sort of vague idea that Manchester was far, far away, and that we should be confronted with many perils before we could reach our destination. Noting that my elder sisters were in tears on the fateful day we were to start, and

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attributing these tears to fear, I smote my manly bosom, and exclaimed : "Cheer up, girls ; I'll protect you." This valiant declaration caused them to smile, notwithstanding that their hearts were torn at the thought that our changed fortunes compelled our leaving the home where they had known nothing but happiness.

Curiously enough, I had another narrow escape from drowning just before leaving my native town. A great friend of my family was an old Colonel, retired. He was an enthusiastic jack fisher, of irascible temper but singularly kind disposition. Being a bachelor, he evinced great fondness for children, and was always bringing us presents and toys. I was a favourite with him. I once heard him say to my nurse : "I like that boy, you know ; he's got a spice of the devil in him." I didn't quite grasp the full meaning of the remark at the time, but the words clung to me. He used to drive a very spirited horse, in a cross between a dog-cart and an Indian buggy, and wherever he went he was accompanied by a devoted man-servant. As I was to learn at a later period, the old Colonel was a "two-bottle man," and after a good dinner and his two bottles it was necessary for his servant to tuck him up in bed.

One day just before our departure the Colonel had arranged for a couple of days' fishing in a delightful village, the name of which I have forgotten, and he took me with him. There was an old flour mill, and a most picturesque inn, with a renowned jack stream running through the grounds. The opposite bank of

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the stream was reached from the garden of the inn by a frail plank bridge, with a rustic railing on one side of the bridge only. In the meadow on the opposite side I was gathering wild flowers, and the choleric, beetroot-nosed Colonel was fishing for jack. Suddenly he called for his servant, who, I believe, was flirting in the garden with one of the maids of the inn. "George, George, quick! bring the net. I've hooked a monster." I heard the cry, rushed from the meadow all eagerness and excitement, gained the tiny bridge, and toppled into the stream. The faithful servant sprang to my rescue in spite of his master exclaiming: "Damn the child! Come here and help me to land the fish." But when he realised what had happened he cast his rod away, and became terribly agitated. He himself carried me, when the servant had dragged me out, to the inn, where my wet clothes were taken off, and I was put to bed. I was none the worse for the involuntary cold bath, and the next day returned home in company with the Colonel, whom I only saw once again. Six months later he was dead.

The sorrowful day came at last when my mother had to leave for the north with her brood. To her it must have been a bitter trial. We reached in due time the grimy town of Manchester without any adventures, although the journey in that day was much more of an undertaking than it is now. For myself, I was disappointed. I had fondly hoped we might have encountered a lion or tiger or even a snake, for I was burning with a desire to do some-

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thing, and my imagination had been quickened by the weird stories of the old witch of Netley Abbey. We spent a few days in London at my paternal grandmother's house, and I was taken to see the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. I was somewhat bewildered by the enormous crowd of people and the immensity of the place, but, nevertheless, became much interested in all I saw, and particularly in an exhibit of a large stained-glass window depicting scenes in the life of Robin Hood. It was designed and painted by a cousin of mine. I had always been very fond of the story of Robin Hood, and this pictorial representation of it delighted me, and aroused in me a strong desire to follow in Robin Hood's footsteps. There were difficulties in the way, however, and in a few days I found myself in Cottonopolis. But to this day I preserve a very vivid recollection of that wonderful Exhibition.

For one term I was sent to a highly pretentious "Academy for the Sons of Gentlemen." It was conspicuous for two things, high fees and plenty of caning. Sentimentalists had not succeeded in abolishing the cane in those days, thank goodness, and vigorous whacking hardened the body, increased the appetite, and knocked the starch and conceit out of a youngster. For myself, I was constantly being whacked, and verily believe I came to like it in the end. I had not yet completed my ninth year when I was given to understand I was "the worst young gentleman in the establishment." It was undoubtedly a fighting Academy, and when the masters were not thrashing

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the boys, the boys were thrashing each other. A favourite weapon with us was a handkerchief with a stone or a marble tied up in one of the corners. This weapon was capable of inflicting a great deal of punishment, and we used to ding-dong each other with it with great vigour, frequently to the "effusion of blood" as the Scots say. The chief thing I did at that Academy was fighting, when I wasn't being caned. Certainly I didn't learn much in the way of lessons. Tuition was regarded as of such secondary importance that after the first term I was transferred to an old-fashioned Collegiate school in one of the most beautiful parts of Cheshire. There I spent nearly six happy and delightful years. The rod was by no means spared, but the acquirement of knowledge was made compulsory on the part of a youth who did not wish to be summarily dismissed in disgrace. I managed to escape expulsion, and my dear parents were gratified with fairly good reports at the end of each term. In other respects, however, I must have been a very refractory pupil, for I was whacked so frequently. It was a caning age, and caning acted as a tonic. My chief sin was in breaking out of school bounds. On the slightest provocation I was off, and would tramp about the country, sleeping in fields or woods, until my pocket-money was exhausted. Then, full of repentance, I returned, and took my whacking without a groan. Occasions were when I prevailed upon a few other daring spirits to follow me. Proudly I led my band of marauders into the depths of the delightful woods that everywhere abounded. War was declared

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between us and the gamekeepers, who regarded me as a youthful terror. We defied and kept our enemies at bay for a long time, until one day I was betrayed by a Judas Iscariot amongst my followers into the hands of a head keeper to whom I had been particularly cheeky. This fellow carried a heavy stick, and he laid it about me with such spite and energy as to cripple me for many days. I may have flinched a little under the severe punishment, but I would not howl out ; that seemed to exasperate him, and I have always had an impression that in his passion he would have killed me had another man not interfered. I then asked him if he had finished. White with rage, and panting with exertion, he made another effort to get at me, but was restrained, and I was counselled to "Hook it." My chastiser was a powerfully built fellow between forty and fifty years of age. I was under eleven. I limped away bleeding, and feeling very much as if all my bones had been pulverised. When I got back to school I sought out my betrayer, and challenged him to mortal combat. All the school was against him ; he was branded as a sneak, and was forced into meeting me in conflict. Wounded and broken as I was, we faced each other two days later by arrangement in a field near the school. Our weapons were handkerchiefs with a marble securely tied in one corner. I was responsible for this mode of settling differences. It was a desperate combat, and afforded immense delight to the crowd of our school mates who had assembled to see the fun. We fought furiously for over half-an-hour, when my

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opponent funk and bolted, and I at once took first place in the estimation of the whole school. Even the chief bully, a powerfully built young man about nineteen, before whom all bowed, generously acknowledged my powers, and as he imperiously tendered me sixpence through his fag he declared with a lordly air of superiority: "Blowed if you ain't the toughest kid I've ever met in all my experience." At the same time he intimated that he would have to "knock some of the stuffing" out of me himself, or I should become too "cocky." I there and then challenged him, but with a display of scorn so intense that it nearly choked him, he replied "that he didn't fight with kids, and would kick me when it suited him." As he failed to carry out his threat I presume that it never did suit him. I may add that the life of Judas was made so miserable in the school that he ran away, returning to his home, somewhere near Macclesfield, and came back no more, for which we were all thankful. Although my tendency to break away from restraint was so pronounced, I was liked by the masters, and at times was accorded certain little privileges that made my class mates jealous. I remained at that establishment until I was well on in my fourteenth year, when an order came from my father, who was stationed in India, that I was to join him, with a view to completing my studies in India, and entering the service of the East India Company. Although I entertained the most devoted love and affection for my mother and sisters, I heard my father's orders with a delight that knew no bounds.

The separation from my family was a painful

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wrench. But I was a boy, ardent, impulsive, and burning with a desire to travel, and so was not affected in the same degree as were those I was leaving behind. One of them I was never to see again. My second sister, poor dear soul, died during my absence. Her death affected me keenly, for we were strongly attached to each other. The ship I sailed in called at St Vincent, Cape de Verde Islands, and there, singularly enough, I had another escape from drowning. Being passionately fond of the water, I had become an excellent swimmer, as during my school days in Cheshire we were taken three times a week during the summer to bathe in Rostherne Mere, and I challenged a young Portuguese engineer, who was going out to Bombay, to a trial of skill in the Bay of St Vincent. At first he treated me with scorn, but being mercilessly chaffed finally accepted my challenge, and while the ship was being provisioned seven or eight of us proceeded ashore, where I and my opponent undressed, and entered the sea. We were to swim out to a rock some distance from the shore, and back again, without resting. We had not proceeded far before those on shore raised a cry of "sharks." My companion immediately lost his presence of mind, and throwing his arms round my neck, we both sank. I managed to get free, but he again seized me. Once more I shook him off, and as he seemed completely dazed I supported him as well as I could. An American man-of-war was in the bay, and some of her Bluejackets sprang into a boat alongside, and pulling with might and main, rescued us. I was very

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little the worse, but the poor engineer was almost in a state of collapse. As it turned out, the alarm of sharks was a false one, and as may be supposed it led to a good deal of angry feeling, as it had nearly cost us our lives. One conclusion I came to, however, was that I was not born to be drowned. We sailed from the island the following afternoon, and that very evening a fire broke out on board, and for a few hours we had rather an exciting time. However, we proceeded on our way, and the fire was subdued without much damage being done.

I first set foot on Indian soil in Bombay, where my father had several friends. I remained a short time there, and then proceeded to Ceylon, where I spent a few days, and arrived in Calcutta in the early days of 1857. At that time I had not completed my fourteenth year. My father received me with every demonstration of delight and affection, and I remember well a remark he made to me. He seemed to be endowed with a prescience which, unhappily, was lacking in others who were content to muddle on in supreme indifference to the moan of the rising storm. "Boy, I am afraid you have come to India at a bad time," he said with sailor-like bluntness, "and it strikes me that before you leave you will have some exciting experiences." Then he added very solemnly: "God watch over you."

At that early stage I did not understand to what he referred, but he soon made it clear, and succeeded in arousing my interest to a high pitch. He told me of the unrest that was manifesting itself amongst the natives, and how with blind fatuity Lord and Lady

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Canning refused to believe that anything serious was likely to happen. Since those far-away days I have learnt much, but even now I am at a loss to understand how so able a man as Viscount Canning was unable to read the signs which were so plain to everyone else.

As the student of history knows, there had been much trouble about Oude, and after threatening long the John Company had taken over the administration of that province, deposed the old King, who had been brought to Calcutta, and was living in semi-state at Garden Reach, a suburb three miles below the city, on what was then a beautiful part of the Hooghly. My father told me the story of Oude, and spoke with some concern about the deposed King being allowed so much freedom.

Although I did not come to a full realisation at this time of the terrible danger that menaced the white people in India, I quite understood the probability of trouble, and experienced a sense of boyish elation at the prospect of seeing some real fighting. My father, a courageous and practical man, lost no time in teaching me how to handle a rifle and a revolver. He had been very active with regard to swelling the ranks of the volunteers, and by his energy and example tried to inspire his friends to prepare for whatever might happen. That something would happen he was convinced. I remember him saying one night as he and a number of gentlemen, his guests, smoked their cigars on the veranda after dinner: "If there is a shindy every white man will

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have to face enormous odds, and pluck alone will save us." About the end of January or beginning of February we started on a tour up country, and, among other places, we visited Cawnpore, where my father had numerous friends and acquaintances. During our stay in Cawnpore we were taken out to Bithoor, some miles from the town. This place was the residence of that most remarkable man, Nana Dhoondu Pant, who at a later stage was to become known for all time as "Nana Sahib," and to be execrated throughout the civilised world for his association with a series of atrocities of so horrible a nature that they have few parallels. The Nana believed, rightly or wrongly, that he had been badly treated by the Company, and he had sent a special emissary, one Azimoola, to England to try and get his wrongs redressed. I had the opportunity of seeing and conversing with the Nana for a short time, and as I was a fresh English lad, just arrived from England, he affected to be much interested in me, and asked my father numerous questions. The man made a curious impression upon me. He was very pompous, exceedingly fat, with a suggestion in his walk, his actions, and his voice, of theatricality. He had intensely brilliant, restless eyes, that seemed to peer right through you, but he lacked the ponderous solemnity so characteristic of most Eastern potentates. He appeared to be particularly lively and energetic, with a perpetual smile on his fat, swarthy face. His lips, when parted, revealed the most perfect teeth, the whiteness of which was enhanced by his olive complexion. This strange

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being, whose correct name was Dandhu Pant, was an adopted son of the ex-peshwa of the Mahrattas, Baji Rao. The Peshwa, or ruler, of Puna was deposed by the East India Company, and allowed to live at Bithoor, with an annuity of £80,000 a year. He died in 1851, and the adopted son, Nana Sahib, succeeded to his wealth and estates; the annuity, however, was discontinued by the Company, and this embittered the Nana. He had a factotum known as Azimoola, a clever, ambitious Brahmin, who was sent to England by the Nana to enter into negotiations with the directors of the John Company in London, and, I believe, to try and influence certain Members of Parliament in his master's favour. I never met Azimoola, but I have always heard that he was an exceedingly handsome man, with the craft and cunning of the evil one. His mission was a failure; but he managed to make himself a *persona grata* with a section of fashionable society, and for a time was lionised, and he became the cause of a good deal of scandal. He stayed in Brighton for a time, and while there made the acquaintance of a beautiful young English lady of title, whom he all but persuaded to return to India with him. Fortunately, his villainy was discovered in time, the lady was removed from his sphere of influence, and no doubt saved from a dreadful fate.

Azimoola went back to India by way of the Crimea during the war; and it is a matter of history now that he represented to the Nana that the English were being severely beaten by the Russians, and the Queen had no troops available for India. Of course, when I

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knew Nana Sahib, no breath of suspicion had attached itself to him. He was regarded as an Indian gentleman of wealth and culture, and was exceedingly popular with the English Colony, while his palace at Bithoor was always open to them. He lived in state, and one of his weaknesses was an English coach and four-in-hand, which he drove with great skill. As a boy, I was much struck with him. I can scarcely explain why; perhaps it was that he had a marked personality that appealed to me. Unless it was among those in his intimate confidence, no living soul in Cawnpore or elsewhere could have imagined that this remarkable man, who made himself so affable and courteous to everyone, was destined to write his name on the pages of history as one of the most bloodthirsty scoundrels the world has produced.

When my father and I left Cawnpore we paid a flying visit to Delhi, and to Meerut, which two or three months later was to run red with the blood of slaughtered white people.

On returning to Calcutta we found that the tension had increased. Mystery was in the air. Men met at each other's houses, and seemed to talk with bated breath. Everyone was afraid to express just the thoughts that were in his mind. Ladies had become very nervous, and mothers were afraid to lose sight of their children. All the vessels that left the river carried immense numbers of passengers. Men who could afford it sent their women folk and children home, or at anyrate to places of safety; but there were many notable examples of devotion on the part of women

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who refused to go while their loved ones were menaced with danger. The most extraordinary rumours were current, and it was difficult to sift the true from the false. It must not be supposed that there was anything like actual panic at this time, but people were impressed with a sense of impending calamity, and had lost faith in the loyalty of the native population and the native troops. There were signs, which those who knew how to read them, justified disquietude. House servants were less deferential; "Palki" bearers haggled more keenly for backsheesh, and when refused became impertinent. The want of respect by the traders in the bazaars for white people was very noticeable. And sailors, who had indulged a little too freely in liquor, were frequently set upon by natives, and beaten. In my own case an incident occurred which, though trifling, was considered a sign of the times, as it was so absolutely unusual; hence my excuse for mentioning it. A cousin of mine, an officer on board one of the P. and O. boats lying at Garden Reach, and I, went one evening to sup with some friends in the Chowringhee district. It was rather late when we left, and in passing a street corner we came upon a group of natives in animated conversation. In ordinary circumstances they would have deferentially moved, and given us the right of way, for they completely blocked the path. My cousin, a vigorous, powerful young fellow, walked boldly into them, when one of their number with a lurch of the shoulders endeavoured to upset him, but in an instant a well-directed blow from my relative's powerful fist

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sent the fellow sprawling. For some moments things looked ugly, but no doubt something in our attitude and manner caused them to think twice before attacking us, although they were more than five to one, so they contented themselves with pouring out volleys of abuse ; but as hard words break no bones, we were not affected, and pursued our way unmolested. I refer to this trifling incident merely to show the temper of the natives at the time, as well as their innate cowardice. We were unarmed, and had that rabble attacked us I am quite sure we should have had a bad time of it. It was the pluck of my cousin that saved the situation. When my father heard of our little adventure he was rather concerned, and cautioned me against going out alone at night. And then, being a brave man himself, and not liking the idea of his son showing any deficiency in that respect, he added, "or if you do, you must have some means of protecting yourself in case you are assaulted." The following day he presented me with a beautiful Malacca cane that was capable of being almost bent double without breaking. The head of it was a leaden ball weighing probably three or four ounces. It was neatly worked over with fine silver wire, and securely attached to the cane, which was thus capable of becoming a very powerful weapon in the hands of a determined man. He counselled me only to use it in self-defence, but to use it vigorously if occasion arose.

One such occasion at least did arise, as I shall presently relate, and to the possession of that cane I probably owed my life.

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To dwell on all the exciting details of those electrical days in Calcutta would expand this volume to undue length. My own personal affairs of that time were too unimportant to be worthy of mention here, beyond a brief statement that I was continuing my studies with a view to entering the Company's service as soon as an opportunity occurred, and under my father's instructions I was well drilled in the use of the gun and revolver. He had a very assorted lot of arms : Brown Besses, the new Enfield rifle, cavalry carbines, old matchlocks, revolvers, tulwars and swords of various kinds. I became a crack shot with both the revolver and the rifle, and swelled with a sense of self-importance as I pictured myself "fighting against fearful odds for Home and Country."

In order that my time might be fully occupied I was placed with a firm of engineers at Garden Reach, and subsequently transferred to the Railway Engineering Department at Howrah.

As the weeks passed the unrest increased, and Lord Canning became more and more unpopular. He was accused of being too sympathetic with the natives ; and though there had been incipient signs of mutiny here and there, it was believed that he was averse to taking any vigorous measures to guard against a possible outbreak on a large scale. At length came the news of the fatal 10th of May in Meerut. I think it is not an exaggerated expression to say that the white population of Calcutta was staggered. And when later it became publically known that General Hewett, who was in command of the troops at Meerut,

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had shown hesitancy and even cowardice in dealing with the mutineers, who in consequence had escaped to Delhi, there was something like a howl of rage. Men clenched their teeth, and muttered under their breath. Nor could it be wondered at, for the reports said that white women and children had been outraged and butchered with the utmost barbarity.

There is no denying that gloom and despondency fell upon Calcutta society, and no attempt was made to conceal the indignation that was felt against Lord Canning. This indignation increased to red-hot anger when he passed at one sitting of the Legislative Council for India what became known as "The Press-Gagging Bill." Looking back now over half-a-century, there is no doubt the "Bill" was a wise one, but it was bitterly resented at the time, and meetings were held to protest against it.

One day, two or three weeks after the outbreak at Meerut, a rumour ran through Calcutta that a plot had been discovered having for its object the massacring of all the Europeans and the plunder of the town. My father, who had taken a most active interest in the volunteer movement, and showed himself keenly alive to contingencies, despatched me with an important letter to the gentleman in charge of the Botanic Gardens on the other side of the Hooghly, opposite Garden Reach. This gentleman, whose name has, unfortunately, escaped my memory, was a close personal friend, and as he lived in an isolated part the letter was one of warning, and conveyed a request that he and his wife and family would come

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to Calcutta, and be my father's guests until the danger had passed. My instructions were to be back before it was dark. "Take your cane with you, and keep your eyes open," said my father as I was leaving.

I went down to Garden Reach in a palanquin. There I engaged the services of a dinghy waller to row me across the river, which at that part was, I think, about a mile and a half broad. Asking me to excuse him for a few minutes, this fellow went to a group of natives who were squatted on the shore near one of the landing piers of the P. and O. Company. When he came back he was followed by two stalwart youths, whom he represented as his sons, and he begged that I would allow them a passage in the dinghy, as they had some business to transact on the other side of the river. The request seemed such an innocent one that I readily consented. For the information of those who have never been in India, I may explain that a dinghy is a round-bottomed boat, with a rising stern, where the sculler stands, and vigorously plies a long flat-bladed oar, after the manner of a gondolier. About the centre of the boat is an arched bamboo shelter for the passengers.

We had not proceeded very far before my suspicions were aroused that there was some mischief brewing. The tide was running down—indeed it may be said to race down in the Hooghly—and suddenly the old, white-bearded dinghy waller ceased sculling, with the result that the boat began to spin merrily along with the powerful current. I ordered him to continue at

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his work ; whereupon he said something in patois which I did not understand, to the two young fellows. Then one of them, speaking in quite good English, asked me what I was going to the Botanic Gardens for. With red-hot indignation I told him not to insult me by daring to inquire into my business ; whereupon he said he must know my business, and, moreover, intended to have very good backsheesh from me. I grasped the situation at once. The three rascals were in league ; their object was to rob and probably kill me. Gripping the ferrule end of my Malacca cane, I turned angrily to the old waller, for the boat was being rapidly carried into a lonely reach of the river, and commanded him to resume sculling. He grinned mockingly ; then I was alarmed by the youth who had so far remained silent fumbling in his cummerbund, and suddenly producing a long, thin knife. Before he could use it, if he really intended to do so, the lead knob of my cane struck him with the quickness of a cobra on the arm ; the knife went hurtling out of his hand, and fell into the water. The other fellow, presumably his brother, made a spring at me, but the business end of the cane caught him full on his shaven pate, and he pitched face downward into the bottom of the boat. The old rascal at the stern began to blubber, piteously begged of me to spare his sons, commenced to use his oar with tremendous vigour, and soon the dinghy was going up stream again. Blood was flowing from the still form at the bottom of the boat ; the other fellow was howling with pain and rage, and holding

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his arm. I returned to my seat, but never for an instant relaxed my vigilance, and after what seemed to me a very long time the dinghy grated on the shingle at the spot where I wished to land. I stepped out very deliberately, and turning to the old man, told him that he was to remain there until I came back, he and his sons, and that he would take me across the river again. I threatened that if he didn't obey I would report him to the authorities in Calcutta, and charge the three of them with conspiring to murder me. I assured him that the whole lot of them would be speedily hanged, and their bodies thrown to the jackals. With many a bob and salaam the wily old villain promised me that my high commands would be obeyed, but I fancy he grinned derisively at my empty threat. I walked away, delivered my letter, and spent a considerable time in the Gardens. I did not mention a word of my little adventure to the gentleman I had gone to see, as I felt rather frightened myself at having taken the law into my own hands. He wanted me to remain there for the night, but as I had my father's orders to return, I declined, and he walked down to the shore with me. The dinghy waller was waiting, but his sons had disappeared, and the blood had been washed away. When we put off from the shore I demanded to know why he had allowed his sons to go off. He whined, and said he could not help it. He assured me they were afraid to return with me, as they thought I meant to kill them ; consequently they had run away, and were hidden in the jungle. No doubt the rascal lied, and he himself had

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sent them away, fearing that I should have them arrested. It was quite dark when we reached our starting-place. I gave the boatman his bare fare and not a pice more, although he begged very hard for backsheesh. I never heard nor saw anything of him nor his sons again. I did not tell my father what had happened, for some time afterwards, as I was afraid he would stop my going out alone. When I did inform him he remarked drily: "I thought that Malacca cane might come in useful. You stick to it, my boy."

Things did not quiet down in Calcutta, and one night everyone was on the alert, for a report had spread that all the white people were to be massacred. Many of the women and children were sent on board the ships in the river; every man and boy armed himself to the teeth, and waited with grim resolve. I did "sentry go" for hours in the compound of my father's house—on my shoulder a Brown Bess gun loaded with round ball, an old revolver in a holster strapped round my waist, and my beloved cane stuck in my belt. It chanced that we had a military friend staying with us, a Captain Penson, who was on his way up country to join his regiment, having been home on furlough. He and I were great chums. He came to me in the compound, and asked if I would like to go with him to Garden Reach; "I believe something is going to happen," he added. I expressed my eagerness to accompany him, little dreaming that I was to be a witness of the dramatic arrest of the King of Oude. I saw the deposed monarch brought out of his palace, placed in a carriage, which was then sur-

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rounded by soldiers with fixed bayonets, and conveyed to Fort William, followed by two or three hundred cavalrymen. The whole business was conducted so expeditiously and secretly that few people outside of military circles knew anything about it. To the King it was an absolute surprise, and though for some moments there were signs of resistance among some of his followers, the hopelessness of the position was soon made apparent by the overwhelming military force. The night passed, but nothing else happened, and the next day the townspeople felt that they had been unnecessarily alarmed. They were to learn later, however, that a deep-laid plot for wholesale massacre had only been frustrated by the alertness and determination of the Europeans. Armed sailors from the ships patrolled the streets all night, and these fellows, who were "spoiling for a fight," inspired the natives with a wholesome dread.

As Captain Penson and I returned to my father's house about two o'clock in the morning we passed one of these naval patrols, and as the young officer in command greeted us, he remarked: "I am afraid there is not going to be any fighting after all." The day following there was a great surprise in store, when it became publicly known that the King of Oude was a prisoner in Fort William. It appeared that the Government had received information that some of the King's followers had been trying to bribe the sentries of the Fort to give them entrance at a certain date, and help them to turn the guns upon the city. Fortunately, one of the Queen's regiments had just arrived

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from either China or Ceylon. I think it was from Ceylon. A strong detachment of this regiment was marched down to Garden Reach from the Fort, and surrounded the King's residence. The commanding officer, armed with a letter from the Governor-General, entered, and, before resistance could be offered, the King and a large number of his suite were arrested, and conveyed to the Fort. His arrest on that memorable night was one of the most dramatic incidents of the Mutiny. It made a deep impression on me, as it was altogether a weird and strange scene. I subsequently saw the old King several times in the Fort. He was a tall, fine-looking man, with a long, flowing white beard and white hair. At one time he must have been a handsome man, but when I knew him he was haggard and care-worn, with a mournful expression of the eyes that I can never forget. He felt no doubt that as far as he was concerned the game was up, and that he had played his last card. The authorities had been too sharp for him.

In the course of September my father suggested that I should pay a visit to Bombay to see some old friends of his who had been living for some time at Malabar Hill ; they were about to take their departure from India and return to England. I arrived in Bombay (it was my second visit) about the end of September, little imagining that I was to become an eye-witness of a still more tragic scene—namely, the execution of two mutineers by blowing them from guns. It happened that one of the native regiments had mutinied ; the ringleaders were tried, and two of

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the worst were sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out in the square of Fort George on the 15th of October. It was quite expected that a desperate attempt would be made by the native population to rescue the prisoners. Consequently the night before an intimation was quietly conveyed to the European residents that all who could do so were to arm and present themselves at the Fort, and thus help to overawe the populace. The gentleman I was staying with, a Mr Tonkin, had, I believe, held some official position in the Company's service, and he readily obeyed the request, taking me with him, for I assured him I was an excellent shot both with pistol and gun, having practised daily in Calcutta. He furnished me with a revolver and a musket, and we marched into the Fort with a number of sailors who had been requisitioned from the various ships in the harbour; they were armed with all sorts and varieties of weapons. If it had come to a row there is no doubt that every white man, whatever his weapon, could have been trusted to give a good account of himself, for everyone was burning to avenge the awful atrocities committed by the mutineers on defenceless women and children in various parts of the country. But no row took place; there were menaces, not loud, but deep; the people, however, were afraid of the handful of determined Feringhees, whose prowess they knew only too well. Besides there were cannon loaded to the muzzles with grape-shot, and grim gunners ready with port-fires, and panting for a word of command which, if given, would have led to the square being

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covered with dead. The two guns which were to be used for the execution were placed in the centre of the square. Each prisoner had his hands lashed together in front of him. Then he was placed with his back to the gun, and a rope was passed round his arms and round the muzzle of the gun, where it was securely fastened. One of the two men was a fellow of splendid physique, and when the sentence was being read his face was a study in defiance and hatred. But I noticed that, as the awful moment drew near, his form seemed to wilt as though his nerve had failed him. At the word of command, "Fire," there was a great burst of flame, a dense volume of smoke, and a shower of human remains. The effect on the natives was to utterly overawe and cow them, and yet for many days afterwards the Europeans had to keep on the alert, and no white man went to his bed without surrounding himself with a little armoury ready for instant use.

I returned to Calcutta about the end of November, and found my father much depressed, for so many of his friends had been killed ; amongst them was a Mr Ronald, a magistrate somewhere up country. I gathered that this gentleman had been most barbarously put to death, and mutilated in a shocking manner. It was about this time, too, that the wife of an officer was our guest. She had come from Madras, and was going up country to join her husband, who was dangerously ill in hospital. I do not remember where it was, but, despite the wishes of all her friends, this devoted wife was determined to be at her

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husband's side no matter what the danger might be. She started on her journey. Three or four days later she was brought back in a dying condition. She had been horribly outraged by some fiends in human shape, and one of her breasts had been hacked off with a sword. She only lived a few hours after her return. My poor father was prostrated with grief; and somehow I felt as if I were no longer a boy, but a grave man. The news that came by every post from the disturbed districts was heart-breaking. Business went on in Calcutta as usual, but it was easy to see how sorrow and suffering were written on the faces of the white people. There in our midst was sickness of all kinds: cholera, dysentery, fevers. Death was everywhere. It was all too sorrowful and too awful for words. Our circle of friends and acquaintances was terribly thinned, and we went to funeral after funeral in the Circular Road Cemetery. Some dear one was stricken down suddenly in the morning, perhaps; at sunset was buried. No wonder that our nerves were constantly on the rack. My father grew grey and old before my eyes, yet he bore up bravely and nobly. As for myself, I had risen to the situation. I fully comprehended the dangers. I was shocked by the horrors. Every morning I crossed the river to my duties at Howrah, and returned to my father's house at night, always with a vague dread that during my absence something had happened. And when my father said in the morning, "Good-bye, boy. God bless you," I understood what was in his mind. He knew that

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there was the possibility of our not meeting again ; death came so suddenly and so unexpectedly at that time. I always carried a revolver with me, but was careful to conceal it ; and I was never without my trusty Malacca cane. Though it was not so much the risk of being attacked and murdered by treacherous natives that troubled us, I fancy, as fear of the more subtle enemies, cholera and dysentery. However, I never once had a day's illness, though I was laid up for something like a fortnight through being bitten in the ankle by a huge centipede which got into my bed. The foot and leg became very much swollen, and were painful for a time. That, however, was a mere trifling detail, and caused no concern. Soon afterwards an incident, slightly more exciting, happened.

And old friend of my father's, a Mr Martin or Fenton—I forget which—who was an inspector of telegraphs, was going to make a journey of inspection of the line connecting Calcutta with Sagar Island, at the mouth of the Hooghly, where there was a station for signalling the arrival of ships, whether outward or homeward bound. It was, in my time, a sparsely populated district, very jungly, very swampy, and deadly with miasma. Mr Fenton was going as a matter of duty. I begged to be allowed to accompany him as a matter of pleasure. I was told there was excellent sport to be had : tigers, wild cats, snakes, wild fowl galore, and there was also just a bare possibility that one might enjoy a little adventure. It was too tempting to be resisted, and I pleaded to my father, who opposed some objections at first, but

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soon yielded, as he was too brave a man himself to prevent his son enjoying an outing because there happened to be a risk, so slight that it seemed hardly worth while taking into consideration. Mr Fenton was delighted. He was quite used to lonely journeyings, but, nevertheless, enjoyed company when he could have it. Our tramp was along the line of the telegraph posts from Calcutta towards the swamps of the Sunderbunds. We set off in the hottest of weather. Our servants consisted of a *babarchy* (cook) and two coolies to carry our folding beds and other belongings. We had several firearms and plenty of ammunition. Although the heat was a little trying, the journey south was pleasant, and we got some good shooting. One day, when we were far to the south of Diamond Harbour, we came upon a disused hut standing in a lonely and swampy region. The hut, which contained two apartments, was built of mud and covered with a roof of thatch made from paddy straw. We decided to spend the night there, and the coolies were ordered to rig up our beds. Then Mr Fenton and I went off into the swamp in search of teal or wild duck for supper. We reached a tank (pond) of beautifully clear-looking water, and decided to bathe. When Mr Fenton came out of the water he complained of feeling faint and cold. However, a little brandy seemed to put him all right, and having secured a couple of fine birds we returned to the hut, as it was getting dark. We ate our curry and rice by the light of a cocoanut lamp—that is, a portion of a cocoanut shell filled with cocoanut oil,

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into which a thin cotton wick is inserted. Then as there was nothing to do, and we were very tired, we turned in. We found that the old thatch was a nest of cobras ; the reptiles were on the prowl for rats, and occasionally a snake and a rat flopped on to the earthen floor and made an infernal din. Nevertheless, I managed to go off into a sound sleep, from which I was ultimately awakened by hearing my name called and Mr Fenton groaning. Forgetting all about the mosquito net that surrounded my little bed, I sprang out, dragging the net with me, and heedless of snakes, rushed to Mr Fenton's bed. By the feeble light of the cocoanut lamp I saw my friend drawn up in agony and looking ghastly ill. He told me he thought he had cholera. He had awakened the servants, who were sleeping at the door of the hut, but as soon as they realised the nature of the illness, like all their class, the cowards had bolted, leaving the sahibs to do the best they could. Mr Fenton requested me to fasten his leather belt, containing his money, round my body ; secure his notebook and papers, and with as much ammunition and as many firearms as I could carry, proceed with all speed to the nearest telegraph station, which, if I remember, was at Diamond Harbour, and telegraph for assistance. In half-an-hour I was ready, and very reluctantly left him ; but he would not hear of my staying, and urged me to go with all possible speed. He assured me I could do nothing, and if he died it was certain I should be murdered for the sake of the arms and the money, as our servants would be on the watch waiting

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to waylay me. They knew only too well that a cholera patient hadn't much chance, especially situated as Mr Fenton was—that is, with little hope of succour arriving in time. Cholera, as a rule, ran a terribly rapid course, and a patient often died within two or three hours of the first symptoms declaring themselves.

It was pitch dark when I left the hut. I had two revolvers, my own and Fenton's, as he did not wish his to fall into the hands of the natives in the event of his death. In addition, I carried my father's Enfield rifle and a cavalry carbine, so that with this armoury and a fair supply of ammunition I was pretty well loaded. It was rather a weird position to be in. The darkness was intense ; I was ignorant of the country ; there were no roads, and on my celerity my friend's life probably depended. He had cautioned me to follow the telegraph poles. This I did for a time, until I found myself floundering in very swampy ground, and I struck off at an angle that I imagined would take me clear of the swamp. From that moment I got hopelessly lost. I wandered into dense jungle, and at last went sprawling over a fallen tree. I am afraid my boyish ardour was a little damped, and when on trying to gather myself together I made the discovery that I had injured my ankle, I must, in the interests of truth, confess that I gave vent to the feelings that surged within me by means of a big *D*. In my fall several of my belongings and I had parted company, and as I had come away without matches, it was hopeless to try and recover them in the dark. Nor was it advisable, having regard to

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lurking snakes, which might be inclined to resent any intrusion on their privacy, to go searching about on hands and knees. There was no alternative therefore, but to wait until the day dawned. I sat on the fallen tree, listening to the voices of the jungle and thinking many things. My foot was exceedingly painful. I had also bruised my arms and elbows, and done sundry other trifling damage, which made me somewhat uncomfortable. I tried to feel very brave, but I am afraid the trial was a wretched failure. It seemed to me as I sat there in my solitude that the world was wrapped in eternal night, and there would be no more day. It was certainly one of the longest nights I ever remember to have passed. However, daylight asserted itself at last. By that time my ankle was swollen to twice its normal size, and when I tried to walk the pain was excruciating. There were no signs or sounds of habitation or human life. To remain there was out of the question. I therefore picked up my scattered oddments, and limped off. I was pretty well sprinkled with blood, as in my fall I had barked my forehead, and the scratch had bled freely. My rate of progress was exceedingly slow owing to my injured foot, and the pain was so intense that I had to make long pauses. By noon I was fairly exhausted, what with pain, heat, hunger, and thirst, and I went to sleep on a slab of rock. I must have slept a considerable time, for when I awoke the sun was well down. I felt refreshed, though my foot was exceedingly stiff. But I hobbled, limped, and hopped along in the direction I thought I ought to go, although I couldn't see the

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telegraph poles. As the sun was on the point of setting I came upon a very small native village on the edge of a road. A number of natives were squatted on the ground eating their evening meal. A few cows were hitched up to a rail, and had evidently just been milked, for two or three women were walking away with earthenware pots on their heads. On the ground near the men were several brass lotahs of water. I was parched with thirst; my tongue seemed too big for my mouth. Knowing that the natives would consider their food polluted if I went too near it, I asked them from a respectful distance to give me some water or milk, for which I would pay handsomely. They refused, and told me that a hundred yards or so farther along the road there was a *dawk* house (a travellers' rest), but in my condition I was not disposed to drag myself along for another hundred yards without first quenching my thirst. I therefore took from my pocket five rupees, placed them on the ground, told the natives to send one of their number with a lotah of milk and a lotah of water and the coins would be theirs, and I would add another rupee to pay for the lotah, which, of course, I should pollute by drinking from. They refused, and made use of an insulting expression, so gripping my rifle menacingly I limped to the nearest lotah, and poured its contents down my throat. There was a tremendous hubbub. The men rose in a very excited state, and seemed disposed to attack me, but evidently thought better of it, and tossing them two rupees, I went off. I found the *dawk* house, a ramshackle,

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tumble-down old place, with the usual veranda surrounding it. A very old man was in charge, and I at once ordered him to procure me some food and drink with all possible despatch, if he didn't wish me to shoot him. He went out, and returned in about ten minutes or so with some ghee, rice and native sweetmeats, and from a cupboard in the house produced a bottle of Bass's ale and a tin of bouille beef; the latter, however, could not be opened, as we lacked a proper tin opener. I broke every blade in a pocket-knife I carried, but failed to get at the contents of the tin, and so perforce had to content myself with the rice, ghee, and sweetmeats, washing them down with the beer. Then the old man rubbed my foot with some oil or ointment he had procured, whereby the pain was considerably eased. After that I dismissed him for the night, and having a suspicion that the villagers might go for me, I barricaded myself in as well as I could. In the guest-chamber was a charpoy, but no bedding of any kind; a chair or two and a table. I did not remove any of my clothing, and resolved not to sleep. My resolve, however, was hard to keep, and I must have dozed, for I suddenly awoke to a consciousness that somebody was trying to open the jalousie, and I heard voices speaking in whispers. I seized a revolver, and waited. There was no longer room to doubt that an attempt was being made to break into the house. I therefore let bang at the jalousie. There was a cry, and that was followed by a howl of rage from several throats, and cries of *Maro, maro*, which meant that I was to be killed. As

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I had no desire to be killed just then, and having no idea of the numbers I might have to encounter, I deemed discretion the better part of valour, and as the rascals were battering on the front door I made my way out at the back, but before I left the house I sent an Enfield bullet through the door. What the effect of the shot was I never knew. Under the cover of the darkness I got out into the jungle, and though I could only limp along painfully, I determined to show fight if I had been followed. There is no doubt, however, that the cowards on finding that the English boy was not trapped, as they believed was the case, did not care to risk their skins so long as he was possessed of powder and bullets. I managed ultimately to reach the road, and followed the telegraph posts until they led into the jungle again, when I had a rest until daylight, and soon after came to the telegraph station, a sort of bungalow on piles in the jungle. Assistance was speedily on its way to Mr Fenton, who, so far from being dead, was found very much alive. It turned out that he had not been attacked with cholera, but severe colic, probably the result of bathing when in an exhausted condition. From some drugs he carried in his little medicine chest he had been able to get relief. In the morning, when his servants crept back, expecting no doubt to find him dead, and counting on the plunder they would share, they were convinced of his liveliness by the whacking he gave them with a stout cane. After I left him he was just as anxious about me as I was about him. But when we subsequently came together

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again in Calcutta we could afford to laugh at the incident. My little holiday certainly had not been a dull one, and but for my unlucky tumble I should have enjoyed the adventure, such as it was.

After considerable delay I received the appointment I had so long been looking forward to in the Company's service, and was at once sent to the great gun foundry at Cossipore. At this place, apart from the casting of big guns, the Enfield rifle bullets were made. The bullet was a conical one with a hollow base, in the side of which were four nicks. The hollow was filled with a boxwood plug, so that when the bullet was fired the plug caused the base to split and open where the nicks were, with the result that it was capable of producing a frightful wound. The boxwood plugs were made and fitted at Dum Dum, where the percussion caps and cartridges were prepared. The bullets, packed in square boxes, were sent from Cossipore to Dum Dum by bullock waggon with an armed escort, and I was often told off to go with the waggons, and bring back the necessary signed receipts for delivery. I used to feel very important at such times, and often longed to see a troop of mutineers sweeping down upon us, so that we might have shown them the stuff we were made of. Fortunately for me, no doubt, my wishes were not gratified, for never a rebel ventured to show his nose. Nevertheless, I managed to get a little excitement, what with fights with natives in the foundry, a narrow escape from drowning again by being capsized in the river from the dingy during a bore (a huge wave that

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runs up at certain seasons), and other trifling mishaps, from which I managed to emerge with a whole skin.

As I cannot bring myself to believe that my further doings in India can have the slightest interest for my readers, I will refrain from reference to them. Had I been a little older I might have had a chance of distinguishing myself. That I did not do so was not my fault ; it was my misfortune—I could not help my youthfulness. Nor can my views or opinions of the causes that led to the Mutiny, and of the means that were taken to suppress it, have the slightest value. But I would venture to remark that the criticisms of certain Members of Parliament during the debates that took place in 1858 filled the Europeans in India with disgust. Two names at least were never mentioned without anger. They were General Thompson, Member for Bradford, and Mr Rich, Member for Richmond in Yorkshire. The former referred to the shooting of the sons of the treacherous King of Delhi by Hodson as one “of the foulest murders and atrocities recorded in human history” ; while Mr Rich said he believed that the reports of cruelties and mutilations by the insurgents were exaggerations, or altogether without foundation. There is not a man who knows from actual experience what the state of native feeling was in those days but will justify Hodson’s act ; while Mr Rich’s aspersions on the honesty of those whose duty it was to report things as they saw them, was a wicked libel. When I think of Havelock’s forced marches to Cawnpore to try and save the victims of Nana Sahib’s lust and

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cruelty ; of General Wheeler's splendid heroism ; of the horrors of Meerut, the hideous massacres at Jhansie ; of the heroism and sufferings during the wonderful defence of Lucknow ; of the thousands of gently nurtured ladies who were outraged and murdered in India, and the fiendish slaughter of little children, I blush to think that anyone owing allegiance to the great Queen of our magnificent Empire should have doubted the honour and truthfulness of men who shed their blood and gave their lives to save India. And they did save it : they fought against overwhelming odds, they suffered and died, but the Britisher's grit told in the end. Generations yet unborn will read of those dark days, and of the supreme heroism displayed by all who held the honour of the Empire dear, with pride. The story of the defence of Cawnpore alone is a story of splendid valour, and I pity the boy or the man who can read it without the blood quickening in his veins. Cawnpore is a great, thriving town now, but the magnificent monument over the ghastly well where lie "A great company of Christian people, mostly women and children," tells of a tragedy so horrible that as long as the world lasts it will never be forgotten. If the Little Englanders, who always believe their own country is in the wrong, would but study the lurid history of the Indian Mutiny, with its thrilling episodes of individual heroism and devotion, and its records of supreme human agony and suffering, and of the thousands of gentle women and innocent children who fell victims to the lust and fiendish

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brutality of the natives, it would surely develop in them a broader and more patriotic frame of mind. I wish that my experiences had been such that I might have been able to write a footnote or two to history, but it was not to be. The dissolution of the East India Company's rule in India was an unfortunate thing for me personally. For private reasons I returned to England towards the end of 1859 for a short spell, coming home in a sailing ship which carried invalids and a number of time-expired men. There was much sickness and many deaths. A funeral at sea is always a very impressive ceremony, and we had many; sometimes there were two and three deaths in the course of a week, and the sad office of committing the bodies to the deep threw a gloom over the whole ship. We went into St Helena for water and provisions; and in view of the recent withdrawal of the garrison from the island in accordance with the cheeseparing economy of the present Government, the following remarks will not be out of place:—St Helena has a strategical value of which people in England are absolutely ignorant. It was chosen as Napoleon's prison on account of its impregnability. A garrison of a few hundred men could hold it against a host. Up to the opening of the Suez Canal it was of great importance as a victualling station for passing ships. Since then it has been neglected, but in case of war it would be of great value. Now, supposing Germany suddenly declared war upon us—we know, in spite of nice things said to the contrary, that Germany does not love us, and is preparing for the

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day, which will probably come, when she will try conclusions with us—swift cruisers carrying a few hundred soldiers could reach the island in a few days, and its value to Germany as a coaling and ammunition station would be immense, while a handful of men once in possession of the place could defy us. It is true there is no harbour and there are no docks, but there is a perfectly safe anchorage opposite Jamestown, and ships can approach within a biscuit throw of that part of the shore. It will therefore be seen that Germany or any other nation once in possession of the island—and what could prevent them obtaining possession of it under the circumstances I indicate?—might cause us a lot of annoyance, and it might even be used as a base of attack on the Atlantic traders. Anyway, from what I have gathered lately, it is the opinion of many naval and military experts that the Government have made a fatal mistake in withdrawing the garrison from the island and leaving it, as they have done, absolutely unprotected. The island is about 28 miles in circumference; the cliffs which protect it from the sea rise 600 to 1200 feet. The only landing-place for troops is the chasm in which Jamestown is situated, and a few guns would serve to defend it. It is only about 1400 miles from the Cape. Its climate is one of the most perfect in the world, and as a sanatorium it might, with enterprise and capital, be turned to profitable account. There is a mountain called Diana's Peak which rises to the height of 2693 feet. In the interior of the island the soil is so fertile that it will grow almost anything.

CHAPTER II

Sudden death of my father in Calcutta—I study with a tutor—Theatrical experiences—Some celebrated actors and actresses—Practical jokes—Charles Dillon and Barney Egan—Amusing story of “Professor” Anderson—I witness the execution of a woman at Newgate—I sail for Sydney—Rough it on the Pacific-coast—Long tramp through the bush—I meet Morgan the Bushranger—A weird experience on the diggings—How I was induced to go in search of a missing friend—I return to Sydney—I meet with an old acquaintance, and sail in a coal-laden ship for China—Terrible voyage and close shaves—Adventure with a junk—I narrowly escape being blown up.

I HAD only been in England a short time when, to the inexpressible grief of all his family, news was received of my father's painfully sudden death. He had been greatly tried during the Mutiny years by financial losses, and the death of dear friends, many of whom were cruelly butchered, and though he had a wonderful constitution, it yielded to the strain. To me the blow was a heavy one. I little dreamed when I parted from him in India I should see him no more on earth. My return to India was now out of the question, and in deference to the pleadings of my dear mother, I remained in Manchester for a time, and read with a tutor, though I am afraid I was a very idle and stupid pupil. The call of the wild was a syren song to me, and the love of adventure had become like a fever. I chafed against restriction and routine. Nevertheless, I was bookishly inclined, with a perfect passion for

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reading, and fell under the spell and influence of De Quincey. My mother's house was little more than a stone's throw from his birthplace at Greenheys. As a small boy, I used to hear a good deal of talk about him, and though he died in Edinburgh the very year that I returned from India, there was still a De Quincey atmosphere in Greenheys, at that period a beautiful neighbourhood, with wide stretches of open country all round, patches of woodland near, and numerous delightful, green shady lanes. To-day it is a hideous, squalid region of bricks and mortar. I read everything I could get hold of that De Quincey had published, and his works exercised a peculiar influence over me. One of our acquaintances at this time was Dr Spencer T. Hall, the "Sherwood Forester," a well-known author, and constant contributor to the *Manchester Examiner and Times*. It was in the columns of that journal that his "Recollections of Remarkable Persons" first appeared. Dr Hall lived at Boness on Windermere, where I used to visit him. He had a magnificent library, which I was privileged to use; and it was my good fortune to meet many distinguished people at his house, including Harriet Martineau and her brother the Rev. James, a truly remarkable man, though he did not fascinate me as did his sister, who was the most unprepossessing, but the most intellectual, woman I have ever known. She talked brilliantly; her knowledge and learning were profound. Hall himself was a ripe scholar, and was well acquainted with many of the literary celebrities of the day, including Mary Russell Mitford, Elihu

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Burrit, James Silk Buckingham, the Howitts, Charles Reece Pemberton, Dr Samuel Brown, Combe, Gregory, Liebig, Bernard Barton (the Quaker), John Clare, the Northamptonshire poet, and many other worthies, about whom I used to hear a great deal from my friend, who was a good raconteur, and was blessed with an excellent memory. Hall himself was a poet of no mean order, and was a voluminous writer. He was also possessed of an extraordinary mesmeric power, which he occasionally put to the test, and as he was a medical man, this brought him under the lash of cheap scribes. His friend, Bernard Barton, defended him vigorously on one occasion in some powerful verses. This roused the ire of a well-known writer of the day who called himself "*Suffolk Punch*"; he attacked Barton furiously, and with execrable taste sneered at him for being in receipt of a literary pension. This drew from Barton a poetical reply, the original MS. of which was presented to me by Hall, and as the rejoinder to the attack is very little known, or at least forgotten, I venture to quote the verses here :

"Poor silly *Suffolk Punch* ! to me
'Tis plain thou hast not got the key
To what I wrote ; nor canst thou see
The reason why I wrote it ;
So Hall and I may rest content
That thy most mournful merriment
Should in the *Chronicle* find vent,
And with good humour note it.

"As for my pension—rail away ;
He laughs who wins, old proverbs say ;

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My self-respect remains my stay,
Thy satire never troubling it.
'Twas won by no servility ;
The Queen conferred it generously ;
And verse like thine might justify
Her Majesty in doubling it."

Hall was a man of marked personality, with a magnificent head ; was a genial Bohemian, and had a hatred of shams and conventionalism. Such a man could not fail to impress a youth constituted as I was, and I know that my mind at that time took much of its bent from him, while the advice and encouragement he gave me have been of great service to me throughout my career. In those far-off days I was very fond of the theatre and theatrical people, and an opportunity was afforded me of gratifying my tastes in that respect. A rich relative of mine had some financial connection with the Theatre Royal, which was under the management of Mr John Knowles. Whether my relative had lent Mr Knowles money, or whether he had an interest in the property or not, I don't know. But I do know that I had the entrée to the theatre, a privilege I was very proud of, and in consequence of which I became acquainted with many of the well-known actors and actresses of the day. One of the productions at the Theatre Royal about this period was a romantic drama entitled "The Son of Night." The cast included the whole of the Payne family, Miss Amy Sedgwick, Walter Montgomery, Julia Seaman, Fred Worboys, Mr and Mrs Horsman, Mr Harker, and others. Walter Montgomery was a

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handsome, reckless, dare-devil young man, much given to doing eccentric things. On one occasion, I believe, he made a wager that he would ride a horse into the dining-room of a hotel where the members of the corporation happened to be celebrating some event by a civic feast. Needless to say, Montgomery won his wager and created a sensation, for it took many men and much rope to induce the horse to leave the room. About this time I also made the acquaintance of Charles Dillon, who came to the Royal on a starr-ing engagement. At the back of the old Queen's Theatre in Spring Gardens was an ancient tavern called the "Harp." It was in the occupation of a Mr Robert Harwood, who, if I remember rightly, was connected with a circus, and owned a magnificent mare named Black Bess, with which he used to perform in a sketch having Dick Turpin for the hero. The "Harp" was the gathering-place for the "Pros," and there I frequently met the genial "Barney" Egan, who was lessee of the Queen's. He was the prince of good fellows, and fond of a practical joke; while Dillon was equally fond of a good dinner. One day Dillon received an invitation from Barney which ran as follows:—"Come and sup to-night with a select few at the Harp. A regular theatrical feed. Bring a pal or two if you like. Hour 11.30."

Of course, Dillon turned up at the time named, accompanied by three friends. The table was spread with a goodly array of glass and plate, and when the order was given for the supper to be served, in marched several waiters, each bearing a large covered dish.

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On the covers being removed there were disclosed a stuffed cat, skewered up like a hare, property bread, property fish, wooden fowls, a canvas joint of beef, etc., while bottles of wine when opened were found to contain toast and water. Dillon appreciated the "sell," and supped on Welsh rare-bits and old ale, for which the tavern was famous. He determined, however, to have his revenge, and the day before his engagement expired he forwarded a huge hamper to "Barney" Egan, Esq., Queen's Theatre. The carrier who delivered it demanded, and was paid, something like ten shillings for cartage. The hamper weighed nearly two cwts., and, when it was opened on the stage, poor Barney had to admit that Dillon had scored. Among other things were a dead dog carefully sewn up in canvas, a pair of very old stage boots, several champagne bottles filled with water, while at the bottom of the hamper reposed a number of paving-stones.

Another interesting personage with whom I became acquainted at this period was "Professor" Anderson, the "Wizard of the North." He was accompanied by two of his daughters, exceedingly pretty girls, who many years afterwards died, as I have heard, in a London workhouse. Anderson opened at the Free Trade Hall, and on the second night of his performance I was present, when an amusing incident happened. One of the bewildering illusions consisted in the Professor asking for the loan of a watch, and one having been handed to him, he proceeded to (apparently) pulverise it in the presence of the audience. To heighten the effect of this trick, one of the assistants

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used to disguise himself as a countryman, and taking his place among the audience, tendered a massive, old-fashioned watch, which was, of course, accepted. When Anderson proceeded to destroy it the countryman sprang up in a very excited state, and created a scene by wildly gesticulating, calling for the police, and vowing that he would have the law on the Professor. On the night in question, the assistant who had been in the habit of personating the aggrieved countryman was absent through illness or some other cause. The result was the services were secured of a rough and decidedly bucolic-looking individual, who was engaged with others in carrying out some repairs in the hall. He was duly instructed as to what was expected of him. On the request for a watch he was to hand up his. When it was to all seeming broken to pieces on the stage he was to spring to his feet, rave and storm, and making his way towards the stage, threaten the Professor. The man appears to have been a very ignorant and stupid sort of fellow, and he acted his part with a realism that caused an unmistakable sensation. Seeing his watch actually smashed, as he thought, he roared out :

"Here, guv'nor, what's tha doing with that there watch?"

"Dear me," answered the conjurer with well-feigned concern, "I thought you had given me permission to smash it."

"Tha'rt a liar," cried the man fiercely, "and, by gum, I'll smash *thee*."

With a leap and a bound he was on the stage, and

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gripping Anderson by the collar, he swung him about, and growled out a string of expletives that are unprintable. At first the audience thought it was all part of the show, and a roar of laughter rolled round the house; but the heavily built, gouty conjurer was being mauled in a way he had not bargained for, and it took four assistants, who rushed on from the wings, to drag the assailant away. Then the vast audience began to show signs of alarm. Anderson presented rather a sorry spectacle, his dress clothes being almost dragged off his back. He was forced to retire to calm his excited nerves and rearrange his dress. Subsequently he finished the trick, and restored the watch intact to its owner, who examining it dubiously, said:

“I’m sorry I punched thee, guv’nor, but, by gum, I thout as tha’d smashed the thing, I did for sure.”

Later on in the evening I was in company with Anderson, who was very much upset, and declared that he had never before been the victim of such a mistake. The incident, however, proved a good advertisement, and the Professor was rewarded for the mauling he had endured by a crowded house every night during his stay. There was one event that occurred in Manchester at this period of my career which was destined to make not only a lasting impression on me, but to influence my future career. This was the appearance of Charles Dickens at the Free Trade Hall in the character of a public reader. I think it must have been early in 1861 that I was a unit in a vast audience assembled to hear the great novelist read “The Chimes.” To me it was a revela-

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tion. I had previously read many of his works, and for a long time had had an unconquerable yearning to see and know the author whom all England was talking about. The man's beautiful, sympathetic voice, the wonderfully expressive eyes, his marvellous eloquence, his magnetic presence seemed to throw me under a spell, and I regarded him as something more than a human being, or at anyrate as a man who was quite different from other men I had so far known. The power that Dickens had over the hearts of the people at this time, was little short of marvellous. On the occasion I allude to the great hall was literally packed from floor to ceiling. Yet that audience was placed under the spell wielded by the man whose voice was like a silver bell, and who acted what he read. The pathos moved the people to tears, the humour stirred them to roars of laughter. There were no accessories of music or scenery, simply one man at a reading-desk; but what a man! What a gift to be able to charm and sway a multitude! Sometimes you could have heard a pin drop, at others the roof seemed rent with the roars of the people as they gave vent to their strained feelings. And when it came to the peroration there was a silence which was almost painful, even a woman's sob here and there only served to intensify it.

"Had Trotty dreamed? Or are his joys and sorrows, and the actors in them, but a dream; himself a dream; the teller of this tale a dreamer, waking but now? If it be so, O listener, dear to him in all his visions, try to bear in mind the stern realities from

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which these shadows came, and in your sphere—none is too wide and none too narrow for such an end—endeavour to correct, improve, and soften them. So may the New Year be a happy one to you, happy to many more whose happiness depends on you! So may each year be happier than the last, and not the meanest of your brethren or sisterhood debarred their rightful share in what our Great Creator formed them to enjoy.” Gently, slowly the book was closed, and the solitary figure seemed to glide from the stage, yet the vast audience remained silent—for hours; it was only seconds, but the seconds seemed hours. Then the people let themselves go; they had the weary man back, and they thundered their approval. He stood there slowly bowing, the tears of heartfelt emotion running down his pale cheeks. I passed out into the frosty night. I was a dreamer; I was dreaming dreams. Charles Dickens had carved his name on my heart. For many days afterwards he seemed to haunt me, and to stir within me feelings and desires of which up to then I had only had a vague consciousness.

My career in India, which appeared so promising, having been cut short by the sudden death of my father, it had become necessary that I should determine upon some plans as to my future. My heart had been decidedly towards literature. At school I had founded and edited a magazine, and I had contributed a few fugitive articles to some of the journals of the day. I had also won two prizes in a literary competition. Although very young, I was painfully

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alive to the difficulties of my position. The family fortunes had undergone a serious change, and it pained me to think that I was so heavily taxing my beloved mother's slender income. She doted upon me, and would have sacrificed herself for my sake, but I was not willing to accept the sacrifice. For some time I had been debating with myself whether I should go abroad or not. Certainly it was not in me to settle down to a city life, even if I had been qualified for it, but the point I had to decide was: "Where should I go to, and what should I do?" After hearing Charles Dickens I was no longer in any doubt. I must take my fate in my hands. I must seek my fortune. It was as if he had opened my eyes to the course I was to pursue. I had an uncle by marriage in Australia—a journalist and printer. I had never seen him, and knew very little about him beyond the fact that he had been in Australia for many years, and was much beholden to a brother and sister of my mother, who had helped him in his early days. I resolved therefore to go to this uncle, for I understood he was doing well. But the resolve confronted me with a serious problem. Australia was a long way off. How was I to get there? I was not easily daunted, however, and generally when I made up my mind to do a thing I managed to do it somehow or other. From my father I inherited a spirit of determination. I came to London to confer with a relative, and it fell to my lot in the course of my stay to witness the execution of Catherine Wilson outside of Newgate. She had

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been convicted for poisoning a Mrs Soames, but it was believed she had put many other people to death by administering colchicum. It chanced that on the morning of the execution I had an early appointment with my relative in Holbourn, and as great crowds were streaming towards the prison, I was seized with a desire to be present at the terrible scene. I managed to get quite near the scaffold. Huge barriers had been erected to prevent rushes by the crowd, which was a densely packed mass of men and boys principally. As eight o'clock tolled the unhappy culprit was brought out. She was a fine, even a handsome woman, and had dressed herself with great care. She resented all offers of assistance, and mounted the scaffold unaided; she carried a handkerchief in her hand, and retained it until the drop fell. It was a very windy morning, and as the hand of the dying woman relaxed, the wind blew the handkerchief among the crowd, and there was a desperate struggle for it. Several persons were injured, I believe, and the handkerchief was torn to shreds. If I am not mistaken, she was the last woman hanged in public in London.

The result of my visit to London was that I heard of a Government agent who was going to Sydney in a sailing ship in charge of a batch of emigrants, and required the services of a young man as private secretary. I immediately applied for the post, and was fortunate enough to secure the appointment, partly through the influence of my relative, and I returned to Manchester highly elated. My mother

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was greatly distressed at the thought of my leaving her, but as I argued that it was to my future welfare, she resigned herself to the parting.

I left Liverpool in, I think, the month of November. The weather was as bad as it could be. We crept down the Channel through thick, dense fog, and had an exceedingly bad passage until we were well to the eastward of the Cape. Then we got a good spell for two or three weeks, when we ran into heavy gales, and carried them with us to the Australian coast.

I remained in Sydney for upwards of a month, and, curiously enough, met Charles Dillon. He had been starring in the Colonies. Our meeting was a mutual and agreeable surprise, and we renewed acquaintance. A few days later I was in a place of entertainment, when I was accosted by the sailmaker of the ship in which I had come from England. I had been rather friendly with him on board, as he was a well-informed and intelligent man, and I learnt a good deal from him. He told me he had left his ship owing to a quarrel with the captain, and that he intended to try and reach some of the gold diggings. He asked me if I would accompany him, and I readily assented. In the course of the next few days, after some slight preparations, we took train to Campbelltown, thence tramped over the Loudon Mountain, and made our way through Bulli and Kiama to Shoalhaven, where, curiously enough, we fell in with a Manchester man, who some years before had come from England with his wife as an emigrant. He was a contractor, and had got a Government contract to build a small break-

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water at the mouth of the river. The stone was being quarried at a place a considerable distance up the river. It was then taken down in barges, and dumped at the mouth. He told us that a great deal of stone had been put in the wrong spot, and would have to be shifted, and offered us a job, which we cheerfully accepted, ignorant of the nature of the work. He provided us with a tent, a truckle bed, and some other necessities, and we went down in a barge to about as wild and savage a spot as could well be imagined. Before we could pitch our tent we had to burn down a quantity of bush, and in doing so disturbed an enormous number of snakes and wild bees. The place was a primitive wilderness, exposed to the full fury of the Pacific. We were provided with a small boat and a flat-bottomed punt. At low water we had to wade out to a heap of stones, lift them with our hands, load the punt, then tow it to deeper water, and dump the stones down again. It was terribly hard work. The stones were encrusted with tiny oysters, and our hands were lacerated. Nevertheless, we plodded away, and if the solitude was irksome, the sense of freedom was truly delightful as far as I was concerned. Our employer had undertaken to send down a stock of provisions every week by a barge leaving on Friday night, and reaching the mouth of the river, where we were stationed, on the Saturday morning. For a few weeks the provisions arrived regularly, then the supply suddenly stopped. One Saturday there was no barge, and we were reduced to our last morsel of salt pork. When the evening

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came we determined to go and interview the "Boss," and inquire the meaning of the stoppage. To this end we cut a sapling for a mast, stepped it in the boat, and rigging up a blanket for a sail, put off as the dusk was closing down. The tide was ebbing, but a fair wind was setting up the river. We had not proceeded very far before our sail went wrong, and while we were engaged in rigging it up afresh we failed to observe that the boat was drifting back, until suddenly, to our consternation, we found we were out of the river and in the open sea. All attempts to regain the river were futile, our sail and mast being too fragile. It was now pitch dark, and the sea was thundering on the shore, the rollers being of enormous length. There was nothing for it but to keep our tiny craft parallel with the shore during the hours of darkness, and then attempt a landing. We passed an anxious night, one of us bailing incessantly, the other steering. When daylight appeared we found ourselves abreast of a great expanse of beach which was thrashed and pulverised by the mighty Pacific breakers. Our chances were rather slender, but we took the risk. We set the frail craft straight for shore, trimmed our blanket sail to catch all the wind, mounted on the crest of a huge roller, and then amidst a thunderous roar and a hell of hissing surf we were flung on to the desolate beach. I narrowly escaped being sucked back by the undertow, but my friend saved me. Our boat, however, and all our belongings were drawn back into the ocean, and we saw them no more. Hungry as we were, and soaked to the skin, our

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position was not an enviable one. We had no tobacco, no matches, no food. The barren shore stretched for miles and miles ; inland was a vast expanse of scrub. However, we had to face it, and guessing our course for Shoalhaven, we set off. The going was about as bad as anything I remember : prickly, tangled scrub, alternated with swamp. There was nothing to satisfy our hunger, but our burning, almost maddening thirst we slaked with the brackish swamp water. Fortunately, we steered our course rightly, and at night saw the welcome lights of the village. We learnt that the " Boss " had been suddenly called to Sydney, and his men had been on the spree ; hence the reason of our being forgotten. We waited for a few days until the fellow returned, drew the money due to us, and set our faces towards Sydney, as my chum had had enough of roughing it in the bush. A day or two after our arrival I got a passage in a coasting steamer going to Melbourne, and my friend, as I learnt afterwards, shipped for India. So we parted, never to meet again. My uncle did not receive me with the cordiality I had anticipated ; nevertheless, he offered me a position which I accepted, and I remained with him several months. Our temperaments, however, were antagonistic. It is true he taught me a good deal, but he imposed so many restraints upon me that I resented them. I regarded him as a martinet, he considered me intractable, as indeed I was, for I had come to love freedom. The syren voice of the wild was still in my ears, so one day, after a stormy scene with my good relative, we parted. My worldly wealth consisted of four

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pounds. I spent something like fifty shillings of this amount in a bush outfit, and "humping my swag," set forth into the wilderness again, with no fixed programme. I simply wanted to move on. I did a long, long tramp, picking up my living as best I could. How I lived I don't know. On one occasion I suffered agony, and nearly perished from want of water. On another hunger necessitated my resorting to a peculiar maggot for food—a little whitish, slimy creature found under the bark of certain trees. I had heard much of its virtues, and found it nourishing and tasty. I wandered through Gipp's Land, crossed the Southern Alps, and fell in with a prospector, who cheerfully shared his little remaining stock of food with me. We tramped on, and struck Gandagai together. There was a wooden shanty which, according to the legend on a canvas sign, was "The Diggers' Arms." Wearily and athirst we made our way to it. There was a bar, a lead-covered counter; there were bottles on shelves, there were glasses and jugs, but there was no living soul, no sign of life. We refreshed ourselves; we felt the world was good. We had come from the wilderness, and here was civilisation. Presently we heard shouts afar off. We went to the door. In a clearing in a hollow were many people swaying and struggling. We concluded there were happenings, and we sauntered forth to chip in. A tall man in pants, high boots, blue flannel shirt, and slouched hat, strode up to us. "What cheer, mates? You've been to my hotel? Hope you helped yourselves? Don't bother me now. We've got a

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cock fight on. I've backed my bird against Mike M'Fee's for four ounces, and if I win I'll give you a good time."

All the population were assembled at that cock fight, even leaving the public-house to take care of itself. Our host's bird did win, and we had the good time. How many ounces changed hands that day I know not; but there was as much excitement over that cock fight as over an English Derby. Mike M'Fee took his defeat like a man, paid his losses to the uttermost pennyworth, and "shouted" for the whole village.

To-day, as I am given to understand, Gandagai is a flourishing city, and too respectable, I opine, to lend itself to cock fighting. The ensuing two years of my life were passed in wild wanderings, with accompanying amount of hardship. My experiences embraced gold digging, cattle driving, prospecting, sheep farming, timber cutting, etc., but I am afraid it would prove wearisome were I to tell the story of my doings in detail at this period. One incident, however, may be of interest. I was prospecting alone in the bush when one evening, as I was preparing my evening meal, a horseman rode up, and greeted me. He was a powerful man with a weather-beaten, determined face. He had small, keen eyes, and I was particularly struck with their restlessness. He seemed to be constantly on the alert, and listening, and though I hadn't the remotest idea who he was, I felt sure he was a hunted man. His mount was a magnificent specimen of a bush horse, and had evidently been hard ridden. His master hitched him to a tree within a few yards of

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my fire, then rubbed him down and fed him; that done, shared the contents of a bag of provisions with me, and when we had boiled a billy of tea and supped he peremptorily ordered me to put the fire out. We passed the night together stretched on the ground, he within reach of his horse, which he had saddled before lying down. Soon after daybreak he took his departure. Before doing so he gave me a supply of tobacco, matches, tea, and a small piece of bacon. As he shook my hand and mounted his horse, he said: "Well, matey, you can say you've shaken the hand of Morgan the Bushranger." And off he went, to be seen by me no more.

Morgan had long been the terror of New South Wales. I shall never forget his peculiar, shifty eyes and his brutish, determined face. He was a fair-spoken man, however, but gave me the impression that he would have stuck at nothing to save his skin. He was subsequently—long after I met him—tracked down, and refusing to surrender, was shot. There is one other remarkable incident associated with this part of my career which I think is interesting enough to be told here. It borders on the supernatural, in which I have little or no belief, and I leave the explanation to those who are capable of explaining it. At the time I speak of I had a gold claim on a river in the Braidwood district. My near neighbour was a young fellow whom I knew as James Litherland. We became intimates, for apart from the fact that we had much in common, he was a native of Manchester, and though I was not, it had been for many years my

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home, and that, of course, was a bond, as it were, between us. He was an erratic sort of man, and would wander away for two or three days at a time, and on his return I could obtain from him no information as to his movements although we were so intimate.

One day he asked me to take charge of his tools, as he was going to have a tramp for two or three weeks. I questioned him about his intentions, but he refused to be drawn. Before leaving he handed me a paper packet of scale gold weighing about eight ounces, and asked me to take charge of it.

"But suppose you never come back," said I.

"Then you can keep it," was the answer; but as he wrung my hand he added. "You'll see me again, chum, as sure as the sun shines."

Six or seven weeks passed, and I had almost given up hopes of meeting my friend any more, when one night I woke up in a great fright. I should explain that my palatial residence consisted of a hollow in a rock, with an old blanket hung up for a door, and my bed a heap of dead fern leaves covered with sacks. The river flowed a few feet away through a wild mountain gorge. My fright was caused by a belief that a great weight had fallen upon me from the roof. I sprang to my feet, and rushed outside, when to my amazement I saw two small lights dancing about over the rushing waters. They suggested two little lanterns swinging in the wind. Gradually their motion ceased until they became stationary, like two dots of fire, and from them a voice came to me, saying: "Go to Shoalhaven; go to Shoalhaven; go

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to Shoalhaven." This command was repeated three times distinctly. Then the lights faded away, and dazed and half stupefied, I crept back to my hole, and fell asleep.

The following morning this dream, if dream it was, came back to me with startling vividness, and I thought that I had suffered from a nightmare, having dined too sumptuously the previous night on "damper" and tea. My knowledge of Shoalhaven was very limited. I had passed a day or two in the village, that was all, and from where I was then located to Shoalhaven was about a three days' journey through dense bush. Singularly enough, that afternoon a man from the stores—"station," as it was called there—went about among the diggers announcing that he was leaving the following morning in a dray to fetch up a load of stores from Shoalhaven, and if "the boys" wanted any commissions executed they were to give their orders. At the announcement that he was going to Shoalhaven the coincidence struck me as being extraordinary, and again I heard the weird voice ringing over the dark waters and bidding me go to Shoalhaven. Why should I go to a place where, apparently, I had no earthly interest? It seemed to me absolutely ridiculous; but the desire to go grew upon me until it became irresistible, and I appealed to the drayman to take me with him. He readily assented, and at daybreak on the following morning we set out on our lonely journey. There was no road through the bush—only a cattle track. It was locally known as the "ninety-mile track." After two or three little

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adventures we reached our destination. Then I began to think that I was a fool for my pains; for why should I have come to Shoalhaven? I had no interests there, and knew nobody, except the man for whom I had worked on the breakwater. As the dray was not going back for two or three days, I put up at the only inn in the place at that time. It was a two-storeyed wooden shanty, and was kept by a widow, whose name I cannot remember, though I think it was Jennings. In the course of my conversation with her she told me she had "a young fellow" who was ill upstairs. He had come from Sydney, she said, and had been taken ill in her house. He was "off his head," she informed me, and had no money and no letters or papers on him that would lead to his identity, but in his ravings he was always calling out for "Chum Muddock." I almost fell to the ground at this announcement, but in a few seconds recovered myself, and bounding up the creaking stairs, rushed into a room on top of the landing, and there on a truckle bed lay my friend Jim Litherland. He was in the grip of fever. The good woman of the inn had secured the services of a local doctor, who had expressed his opinion that the patient would not live many hours. I had a different opinion, though I was not a doctor. I hadn't been sent to him by some mysterious power simply to see him die. On the third or fourth day he had a lucid interval, during which he recognised me and wept for joy. From that moment he began to mend: the crisis was over. I nursed him night and day for a fortnight, during

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which he told me that he had gone up to Sydney to "have a burst." When all his money was done he was told by the landlord of the house, where he had deposited his bank draft, to clear out, a trifle of money being handed to him to get somewhere. Diggers who had "burst their pile" and become penniless were not wanted in Sydney. He paid his passage by a coasting steamer for Shoalhaven, which was the point of departure for the Braidwood. At Shoalhaven he was seized with illness, and in all probability would have died, and been buried as an unknown, if I had not been sent to him by that mysterious voice. Whether I actually saw those lights dancing over the black waters of the rushing river; whether I actually heard the mysterious voice out of the darkness bidding me go to Shoalhaven; or whether it was all a dream, I have never been able to determine, though I strongly incline to the belief that I did spring up in the manner stated, that I did see the lights and hear the voice, when all my senses were fully awake. Whichever way it was, the fact remains that I was drawn to my friend by some strange psychological force, and I humbly believe I saved his life.

I talked to him about it, and he seemed much concerned. He was a peculiarly reticent man. He had received a good education, and evidently been well brought up; but I conceived the idea that there was some strange secret in connection with his life which at times he yearned to tell me, but could never bring himself to do so.

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As soon as he was able to journey from Shoalhaven we humped our swags, and tramped back to our claims together, during which I gathered from him that he had gone to Sydney to see a young lady with whom he believed himself to be in love. She had disappeared, however, and he could get no trace of her. That maddened him, and he abandoned himself to recklessness. He had two or three attacks of illness while in Sydney; but it was not until he reached Shoalhaven, on his return journey, that he felt seriously ill, and he remembered one night having a horrible fear he was going to die; then an intense and passionate yearning to see me again took possession of him. After that his mind became a blank until suddenly he recognised me as I sat by his bedside, and knew then that he would get better.

For some months afterwards we lived the glorious life of freedom together. Becoming dissatisfied with our claims, we abandoned them, and went forth in the wilderness once more, wandering north-west to Yass, thence north to Bathurst, and other places. We tramped and starved and were happy, for our amity was perfect. It was the friendship, the camaraderie, the share-all and live-and-die together existence which men lead in the wilderness. But the time came at last when we had to part. We could not tramp together all our lives. I wandered forth to China, and he—Heaven only knows!

Forty years is a long period in human affairs. I have often wondered if my old chum is still on the face of the earth. If he is, and should he perchance

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read these lines, and give me a sign, I will go to him again if possible as I went to him at Shoalhaven. What a meeting we will have, and in our old age we will live again the glorious days of freedom of our wild and adventurous youth, when we wandered together through the Australian wilderness and the burden of life sat lightly upon us.

I finally turned my back on the Braidwood region. I had had several attacks of fever and ague, and although I had fought against it, I was bowled over. I came down to a place called Narrigo, and put up at the "station," kept by a Scotsman named Allcorn, who, besides running the store, was the owner of fat pastures and many sheep runs. Here I was laid up for a time. There was a long, shingle-covered hut, in which were numerous beds. A bed simply consisted of four stumps driven into the ground. Over these was stretched some canvas, that again being covered with straw. The pillows consisted of coarse canvas bags stuffed with fern leaves. Down the centre of the hut ran a table consisting of planks. Into this place the diggers from round about crowded at the week-ends, and there was pandemonium until Monday. They gambled, drank, fought, and did everything but say their prayers. In this hole I lay sick for many days. My worldly wealth consisted of some scale gold worth about £150. It was done up in scraps of paper, and I kept it in a bundle together with my magnificent wardrobe, consisting of a pair of old boots, ditto old pants, an old flannel shirt, a comb and brush, and that was all. I stowed my precious bundle in my bed,

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whence it was sneaked one night when I was delirious with fever. Who the thief was I never knew, nor did I get my property back. When I was a little better I had to work out my indebtedness. Allcorn was a nigger driver. He sent me to clear a huge field from a forest of thistles six feet high. I had to slash them down with a long bill-hook. It was terrible work. The sun scorched me to the colour of brick, and I had to divide my attention between the thistles and the snakes, for the field swarmed with them. I stood it for four days, then struck. As I was still in the fellow's debt, I spent the next few days in driving a team of horses that went round and round chained to a long wooden bar which worked a flour mill. I toiled for fifteen hours a day, and subsisted on damper and milk. Such an experience would do some of the working men of England good; they would know what work meant. At last I was free. A friend in need gave me a tiny nugget, which I sold at the store for 25s., and as a dray was starting for Shoalhaven, I climbed in with the driver, and got a lift, for I was still weak and ill. As was customary then, the dray was drawn by two horses, tandem. The driver was a wild, reckless, fearless fellow. Towards the evening of the second day we were caught in a terrific thunder-storm. The lightning was appalling, and trees were struck close to us. The rain came down like a deluge, and we were half drowned. My companion said he knew of a good camping spot in the open, and he would reach it or "bust." He lashed his horses into a gallop, although the darkness was so intense that

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but for the lightning we couldn't have seen the way. The dray swayed like a ship in a storm. We were drenched, and soaked to the skin. The animals, what with the cruel whip, the blazes of lightning, and the roar of thunder, got out of hand, and tore madly along. It seemed impossible that we could escape being dashed to pieces against the trees. Suddenly we came to a stop, and a horrible squelching told too plainly what had happened. We were swamped. The leading horse plunged madly, and sank lower and lower. We cut the traces, and we heard his piteous neighing and final gurgle as he went under. We were powerless to do anything. We huddled in the dray for hours, and cursed our luck. Our matches were sodden, so that we couldn't even console ourselves with a smoke. The storm died away. Gradually the day broke. Not a trace of the first horse was to be seen, and the other poor creature in the shafts had been almost bled to death with swamp leeches. In a little while some stock drivers hove in sight. We coo-ed. They answered, came to the rescue, and hauled us out. We continued our journey with the single horse, and reached Shoalhaven without further mishap. There for the first time for many months I slept on a bed, and had a right good, square meal. And I shouldn't like to say how much tobacco I smoked. From Shoalhaven I got a passage in a coasting steamer bound for Sydney, where I landed with exactly three halfpence in my pocket and nothing but what I stood upright in. It was a pouring wet night, and sitting on the doorstep of a warehouse, I

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resolved myself into a committee of ways and means, and deliberated whether I should spend my small fortune of three halfpence in tobacco or food. But before I could come to a resolution a bobby on beat confronted me, and entered into conversation, for he saw I was from the wilds. He promised me temporary hospitality, gave me some tobacco, and named a spot where I was to meet him in about half-an-hour, when he would be off duty. Thanks to that noble member of the force, I had a magnificent supper of beef and bread, washed down with excellent beer. The following morning he took me to a cheap lodging-house kept by an Irishwoman, and my policeman friend made himself responsible for two weeks' board and lodging. I had roughed it a bit in my time, but that boarding-house was a little too strong even for my hardened nerves. The company was mixed, and far from choice, while Norfolk Howards were there in such countless thousands that I preferred to sleep on the grass under the trees in the Domain. Before the fortnight had quite expired I fell in with the skipper of a trading vessel. I had previously met him in Bombay, when he was a third or fourth mate. We greeted, and explained. He told me his ship was going to load coal at Newcastle for Shanghai, and he asked me if I would go to China with him. I expressed my perfect willingness to accompany him on an exploring expedition to Hades if he were so disposed, if I could only make a move and go somewhere ; so he agreed to ship me as supercargo, and when "I signed on" the following day I got an advance of

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money, and once more was in clover. I paid my landlady, forgathered with my friendly bobby, gave him a lock of my hair, and that night took passage in a coaster for Newcastle, situated at the mouth of the Hunter River, about seventy-two miles north of Sydney. It blew a hard gale all night, and the coaster had a bad time of it, but ultimately I landed at the coaling port, and joined my ship. She was a barque-rigged vessel, much the worse for wear, and ill found in every respect. The mate, a Mr Bates, was in charge of her. As I subsequently learnt, he was known as "Belly-ache Bates" from a habit he had of constantly pressing his hands on his epigastrium, and contorting his features as if he were in pain. It was mere habit, however, and he proved to be an excellent fellow as well as an expert sailor. He and I became good friends. Our vessel rapidly filled up with coal; I tallied the cargo, and when we had shipped the stores we put to sea. I soon discovered that the skipper was a dipsomaniac, a silent drinker, and apt to become very violent when in his cups. He funked Torres Straits, saying he was not going to risk his "hooker" in that "narrow gut," and swinging her round, made for the eastward, and things began to go wrong. One morning at sunrise we found ourselves in the bight of a huge reef known as "Indispensable," and only escaped disaster by the skin of our teeth. There had been but a light breeze all night, and the ship had only made five or six knots an hour. Had it been otherwise we must have been dashed to pieces on that reef, and another vessel would have been posted at

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Lloyds' as "missing." Between New Britain and New Guinea we were attacked by natives in a war canoe, and had some difficulty in getting rid of them. Probably they would have succeeded in their design of turning us into potted meat but for the fact that we had a little brass signal cannon on board, which we loaded to the muzzle with old nails, screws, and bits of iron. When that cannon was fired it seemed to those on board as if the end of the world had come, and it so dismayed our cannibal friends that they pulled away as fast as their rowers could take them.

In the China Sea we were overtaken by a terrific typhoon. We had every stitch of canvas set, including studding sails alow and aloft. The sails were blown to ribbons; the jib-boom and the fore and main topgallant masts were carried away. All night we wallowed in the trough of the sea while we cleared the wreck, the skipper lying in his bunk in a state of insensibility. A day or two later we ran into a small islet known as the Beehive, but, fortunately, got off without any material damage when the tide rose. After an exceedingly long passage we towed up the river, and anchored abreast of Shanghai, and when the cargo was discharged I severed my connection with the ship, and was not sorry to leave her.

I spent five months in Shanghai and its neighbourhood during an awful epidemic of cholera, which swept off many of my acquaintances, and cast a deep gloom of sadness over the white population.

One day I had an amusing little adventure which I

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am tempted to relate, for it came as a pleasant break in the dull routine of the life I was then leading. It was customary for the Europeans who could do so to sleep on board one or other of the vessels lying in the river, so as to get out of the stuffy, sweltering, and plague - stricken town. I used to go on board a Liverpool ship named the *Ariadne*, which was waiting for a cargo of cotton. She had discharged her crew, with the exception of the carpenter, a Scotsman of the name of Macpherson, a black cook, the boatswain, and a boy, and the third mate, who was ill. One evening about five o'clock I went on board as usual, and found everyone very excited, for a rice - laden junk had run foul of the vessel's bows, and was jammed against the chain cables. The Chinese crew, as is customary under such circumstances, had slipped overboard, and swam ashore, leaving the junk to look after herself, as she was quite capable of doing, they would have argued, since she had a large eye painted on each side of her prow. The Liverpool skipper, however, was determined to hold her if possible, as security against the damage he had suffered, otherwise, as he knew too well, he might go hang, for the owners of the junk, whoever they were, would never pay a single cash. As I stepped over the gangway he hailed me with delight.

"Here, old chap!" he exclaimed, "jump on board that jolly junk, and stick to the blessed thing." And addressing the carpenter, he ordered him to go with me.

It was a thing that appealed to me, and clambering

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over the bows with alacrity, I boarded the junk, followed by Chips. Then the skipper dropped me a revolver with a strap attached to the stock so as to fasten it to the wrist, remarking: "You may want a popper, you know."

By the united efforts of those on board the ship, aided by myself and Chips, we got the junk clear. Then the fun began. We wanted to anchor her, but couldn't get the beastly anchor over the side, and as the tide was running up like a mill dam, the junk with her painted eyes saw a chance for a lark, so she butted into a steamer, and some persons in authority on deck, not knowing the circumstances, used language that so shocked the feminine susceptibilities of the junk that she went off shyly at an oblique angle, and tried to sink another junk lying at anchor. Failing in this rather unneighbourly attack on the poor junk, which had done her no harm, she waltzed merrily up the river, and Chips began to look glum. This running amok was not what he had bargained for, and it seemed to promise trouble.

"The best thing we can dae," he said, "is tae get on some vessel, and let this bally thing gae her ain way. She's far too frisky for my liking." In a few minutes we cannoned off the white, a little steamer anchored in midchannel, and Chips, with an energy that belied his years, for he was an old, grey-bearded man, sprang on to the steamer's rail, and I was left in full charge. I determined to see the thing through, and waited for developments. I knew that the run-away craft must bring up somewhere, and she did in

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a manner I had not calculated upon. She drifted into the floating town opposite the native quarters, and some of the enterprising inhabitants scenting loot, swarmed on board, and things began to hum. It was too good a chance for those piratical river-dwellers to let slip. I assumed a very commanding air, and ordered them off; whereat they laughed, and as the opportunity of trying conclusions with a white youth didn't often occur, they were evidently not disposed to remain idle. I faced them with the "popper," but there was no pop in it. The caps were rusted on the nipples, and when one of the looters whacked me on the head with a bamboo pole, I felt I was at a disadvantage. It was nearly dark, and as I saw no signs of anybody coming to my aid, and the odds against me were overwhelming, I very reluctantly backed slowly to the high, rising poop, and cursed the fate that had placed me in such a situation without an effective weapon. I could not even secure a bamboo pole. The almond-eyed rascals tumbled over each other in their eagerness to get at me; but the deck was encumbered with sails and ropes, for everything had come down with a run, and this fact enabled me to give up my command—justifiably, I hope—and retire. On reaching the taffrail, I sat on it, spun round as on a pivot, and dropped into the river—or rather let me call it a sewer, for it was nothing else. It was an undignified exit from the junk, but what else could I have done? As I went below the surface of the foul and polluted stream, I thought it was precious hard that after having escaped the cholera for so many months

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I was now probably to die of typhoid fever. I knew I should not be drowned, for I wasn't born to be. When I came to the surface I struck out for the shore, with the useless revolver still strapped to my wrist. A few yards away was a native boat, on which two women, a young one and an old one, were cooking rice over a brazier of charcoal. Getting hold of the side of the boat, I hoisted myself in. The eyes of the women almost tumbled out of their heads with astonishment, but as I considered it was an inopportune moment for explanations, even if I could have spoken their language, I thrust the dripping revolver in their yellow faces, and signed to them to hoist their wooden anchor and row me down the river. Up to that moment I never thought it possible that Chinese coolie women could display so much energy; and as we sped down the stream in the darkness I supped off some of their rice, and thought that after all there was always some compensation for one's little mishaps. As I did not deem it advisable to sit still in my wet clothes, I made the women put me ashore opposite the English bund. That side of the river in my time was principally paddy fields, and my intention was to run until I was opposite the ship, which I thought I should be able to pick out in the darkness, and hail her to send a boat. It was an excellent idea, but it didn't pan out well. In my eagerness I plunged into a narrow irrigating creek, and coming up, struck against something which proved to be a small flat-bottomed punt, on to which I scrambled, and felt then that it was absolutely certain it wasn't my fate to be drowned, and

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so far I have escaped hanging. By that time I was too exhausted to argue what the probabilities were of my being hanged, and utterly indifferent as to what might happen during the next few hours, I promptly tumbled off to sleep. The sun was up when I awoke. I was stiff, and not altogether comfortable. Moreover, I found that some of the swamp leeches had been sampling me. It was an unfair advantage on their part, but there is a good deal of give and take in this world. As my head was painful, and had a lump on it the size of an egg where I had been whacked with the bamboo, and I was ravenously hungry, I moved off as fast as my rusty joints would allow me to do. Discovering the ship, I hailed her, raised a flag of distress, and was promptly taken on board. The skipper seemed disposed to fall upon my neck and weep, but I asked him to order me a pint of Bass, tell the steward to prepare a bath, and I intimated that after that I intended to go to bed. Curiously enough, the hunger had left me, but I found the Bass like nectar. For many hours I slept as sound as a top, and was none the worse for my little spree, beyond experiencing some stiffness for a few days and soreness from my broken pate. The carpenter's criticism of my expedition was rather severe. "Man, you was an awfu' fule not tae dae as I did. They yellow deevils nicht hae killed you. You shouldna' tak they kin' o' risks. The game's no worth the cannel."

It is a curious thing that a week or two later I narrowly escaped being sent skyward by a bursting boiler. I was on my way to the ship as usual in the

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afternoon, when a large sailing ship was being towed up the river by two tugs, one ahead, and one lashed alongside. The latter was a high-pressure, snorting little wasp, the engineer, a young Englishman, being a friend of mine. As I hadn't seen him for some time I told my sampan fellow to row me to her. He proceeded to do so, and when within fifty yards there was a terrific explosion. The boiler had burst, and every soul on board was killed. One of the Chinese hands was actually hurled into the foretop of the sailing ship, and the wreckage of the boat fell all around, some of it on to my sampan. I need hardly say I was terribly shocked, for the wreck of the tug was so complete that it was only too obvious no one on board could have escaped. If I remember rightly, my poor friend's body was never recovered.

CHAPTER III

I leave Shanghai in a coasting junk for Amoy—I try to join the rebels, but am prevented—I return to Shanghai, and sail for New Guinea—Am the guest of a cannibal chief—A memorable feast and an undesirable dish—I return to England, and start for the United States during the war—Riots in New York—Negroes hung on lamp-posts—Back in Manchester—I make the acquaintance of Toole, Irving, Charles Mathews, Joseph Jefferson, Charles Calvert, and others—I cross the Atlantic again—Fire panic on board—An exciting time—A man threatens to stab me—Revisit Australia—Come home round the Horn—Narrow escape from running into an iceberg—I proceed to London, and become the proprietor of a newspaper—Make the acquaintance of Field-Marshal Sir William Gomm, Shirley Brooks, Mark Lemon, Blanchard Jerrold, Tom Hood, William Brunton, Mark Twain, Joachim Miller, and others.

THE little incidents I have recorded in the last chapter served, to some extent, to relieve the monotony of those weary, weary days in that pest-ridden hole, where the sun blistered you like frizzling bacon, and people were dying like rotten sheep. It was the height of summer, and the heat terrific. There was no escaping it, and then the sickness everywhere had a most depressing effect on one's nerves.

One night I was playing cards on board a ship when I was suddenly seized with a strange and unaccountable illness, giddiness, internal pains, a cold perspiration, and tendency to vomit. As everyone at that time had a horror of cholera, and my friends jumped to the conclusion at once that I was in for it, the doctor's signal lamp was hoisted. In the course

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of an hour a shore doctor came off, and though I was then better, and protested against being removed, the doctor, who like everyone else had cholera on the brain, bundled me off to the French hospital, and I was borne into the cholera ward, about as grim and ghastly a place as imagination could picture. There were patients in all stages of the horrible disease. I was attended by a Sister of Mercy, and to her I appealed to secure me a private room, for which I was willing to pay. She promised to see what could be done. But when two hours had passed, and nothing had been done, I could not endure the awful scene any longer, so got out of bed, and promenaded up and down the corridor. Presently an attendant came to me, and told me to follow him, and I was taken to a private room, where I was examined by a doctor, who said that I was not suffering from cholera, but violent and acute indigestion, but as I had been amongst cholera patients I must now go through quarantine, and be isolated for many days. It was not a cheering prospect, but I was compelled to submit to it. The law was very strict on the subject, and properly so. In two days I had quite recovered, but had to remain in the awful place a fortnight. My stay, however, was rendered endurable by a charming Sister, a little Irish lady, who was known as "Sister Mary." I fell desperately in love with her, but let my love lie concealed "like a worm i' the bud." She was one of God's angels, who had given up the world for the sake of suffering humanity. I never knew her by any other name than "Sister Mary," and I saw her no more

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after I left the hospital, but I have never forgotten her. If she be living, may all the peace and contentment that a well-spent life can bring be hers. I know that I was a better man for my short acquaintance with that heaven-sent woman.

It seemed as if I was too tough to be killed easily, so having completed my period of quarantine, I was turned out, and felt like one lost. Needless to say, I got tired of kicking my heels doing nothing in such an inferno; consequently I took passage in a coasting junk going down to Amoy, as a merry rebellion was in full swing, and I heard that the rebels were within fifteen miles of that ancient seaport. Some of my well-wishers, who were sadly lacking in humour, assured me that my throat would be slit before I had been at sea two days. I had "ma doots," however, for as I had escaped the cholera, the filthy water of the Shanghai River had not given me typhoid, the swamp leeches had failed to bleed me to death, and the explosion of the boiler had not extinguished me, it seemed to me that my destiny was unfulfilled. So to sea I went, and had a jolly time of it, though I was prevented by a lot of absurd sentries, with old matchlocks and scythes, from getting out of Amoy to join the rebels, who were being hammered by General Gordon. One night, however, I resolved to make a desperate effort to reach the open country, so made my way to the seashore when the tide was out. The cliffs extend for miles, gradually lessening in height until they reach a great open space running inland. On and on I tramped by the light of the moon. It was

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monotonous and wearying, but I persevered. The sea thundered on the shore, and the spume saturated me. Sometimes I had to wade through creeks; but I began to chuckle, as I seemed within measurable distance of succeeding in my stupid and quixotic enterprise. When I reached the open space, however, my jaw dropped, and my chuckling ceased. There was a Chinese bivouac. I was promptly challenged and seized. I assumed a magnificent air of injured innocence, tried to explain that I had simply been enjoying a stroll by the sad sea waves, and that my admiration for their splendid country was unbounded. The officer in charge spoke a little pidgin-English, so we hobnobbed. He gave me some stewed puppy, as I believed, and I washed it down with arrack. I then rolled myself in a rug he provided me with, and slept; it was the sleep of the wicked deceiver, but it was none the less sound. The next day I was ignominiously marched back to Amoy between two guards armed with old matchlocks. Probably if that officer of the Imperial Chinese forces had guessed that my intention had been to throw in my lot with the rebels against the constituted authorities, the story would have been different.

After a short stay in Amoy, during which I was initiated into the mysteries of fantan by a rascally old mandarin, who also gave me the material for my subsequent book, published by Chatto & Windus under the title of "The Golden Idol." I returned to Shanghai, and soon afterwards went down in a Beche-de-mer, fishing schooner, to New Guinea. We sailed about

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between there and the adjacent islands of New Britain, New Ireland, the Solomon group, etc., for many months, enjoyed a delightful time, and had a little excitement occasionally. We were forced to dodge the cannibals on the one hand, and the reefs and rocks on the other, and found it difficult to keep cool with the thermometer at anything from a 100° F. to 130° F. in the shade. We did not catch many fish, but got plenty of fever, and had no cause to complain of monotony. It was a thousand times preferable to Shanghai. It was at this period that for the first time in my life I had the honour of being specially entertained by royalty. My esteemed host was a cannibal Chief or King of New Britain. At first he seemed undecided whether I should form the chief dish at a banquet he contemplated as a means of celebrating his success in wiping out a neighbouring tribe, or be his guest, and dine with him, instead of his dining off me. The gift on my part, however, of a brand new Sheffield jack-knife, which he took a fancy to, so touched his tender royal heart that he fell upon my neck, and vowed that I was his friend for evermore. He thereupon invited me to his palace, which consisted of a hole in the ground covered over with a sort of gigantic beehive. That evening I was publicly entertained at dinner in the town hall, or Corroborie house, to give it its local name. It was a large bamboo mud hut, tastefully decorated with the skulls of mine host's dead enemies. I am sorry I cannot reproduce the menu, but it was varied and tasty, *very tasty*. The chief dish was stewed snake

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served with putrid shark-blubber sauce. It was one of those things which cling: I very often recall the flavour of it now, and find some difficulty in suppressing a shudder. It was unlike any other flavour that I remember. The sole vintage we quaffed that night was "Kava," made from the saliva of my royal host's favourite wives. We sat on the ground, used our fingers for forks, and found the way to our mouths by the light of some peculiar torches that gave off suffocating fumes. Altogether the feast was a pronounced success, and I remained with my friend three days until I had recovered from the effects of the right royal feast, and then bade him a long and tender farewell. I fancy he was more sorry to part from me than I from him. Ultimately I had to go back to that awful hole, Shanghai, and after a hurried trip to Hong Kong, Singapore, and a few other places, I returned home in a sailing ship that was about six months on the passage, during which we ran short of provisions. Everything on board was rotten. We put into St Helena, and purchased some Government stores, which turned out to be infinitely worse than anything we had on board. We were harassed with cockroaches and many other disagreeable things, and to make matters worse, several of the crew were ill with scurvy. However, we reached port at last, to the intense joy of everyone on board.

During my absence my eldest sister had become the wife of a wealthy Lancashire cotton spinner, and I received a commisison from him and a partner of his, a Mr Maurice Williams of Liverpool, to proceed to

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America on a delicate errand, which was nothing more nor less than to try and secure some blockade-runners to get cotton out. The Civil War was at its height, and I had a real good time, though I was unable to carry out the duty entrusted to me, but that was not my fault; it was rather my misfortune. There were difficulties in the way of accomplishing my purpose which we had not calculated upon. I returned to England to discuss the situation with my relative, the result being that I went back to the States, and ultimately found myself in New York when the terrible riots took place against the Conscription Act. I saw several niggers strung up to the lamp-posts near Central Park, and was in more than one scrimmage. Pandemonium reigned for several days, and an enormous amount of property was destroyed. I fancy sometimes that, like the harmless, necessary cat, I have possessed nine lives, otherwise it is difficult for me to account for the narrow shaves I have pulled through. To the present day I am puzzled to understand how I came out scathless from those riots. What I do know is I had a real good time and plenty of fun. It chanced also that I was in America when President Lincoln was shot in Ford's Theatre, Washington, by Wilkes Booth, and subsequently I tried to see his body lying in state, but did not succeed owing to the enormous crowds, who were formed in a long queue, and moved a few inches at a time. At last I determined that a dead man, though he had been a president, wasn't worth all the trouble and discomfort, and I abandoned the attempt.

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My mission was a complete failure, and I returned home rather disheartened. I don't think my brother-in-law ever forgave me. He thought that the failure was my fault. Perhaps he was right.

A break now occurred in my wanderings, and I came to anchor for a time in Manchester again, where many of my relatives were still residing. I made the acquaintance of John L. Toole, Henry Irving, Charles Mathews, Joseph Jefferson of "Rip Van Winkle" fame, Charles Calvert, and others. At the back of the Prince's Theatre at that time there was an old-fashioned ale-house of the true Lancashire type. At a certain hour in the evening Irving could always be found in the snugger of that inn playing dominoes, a game he was very fond of. I used to think then that he was just the sort of man who would certainly make his way in the world. He was peculiarly thoughtful, and paid great attention to petty details that the average man would have scorned to trouble himself about. I remember one night when I was present Irving was greatly annoyed by a derogative remark made by a young actor, then unknown, but who subsequently made a name for himself. It was personal to Irving, who was greatly angered, and he exclaimed, with considerable heat: "I'm going to mount to the very top of my profession, and compel the world to recognise me just as sure as you are a living man."

It was a prophecy, and we know now that it was to come true.

At that time Irving was a thin, delicate-looking man, with long, flowing hair, a peculiarly pensive

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expression, and a quiet, reserved manner, that had a tendency to suggest to anyone who was not familiar with him that he was unsociable. Although in those days he could not have been very well off, he spent his money with a free hand, and I know of many little acts of kindness that stand to his credit.

Jefferson was also a man of marked personality, unmistakably American, slow and deliberate in his speech and movements, and in his general appearance suggesting a well-to-do farmer with an eye to crops, rather than an actor. His *Rip Van Winkle* was an inimitable performance. I have seen other *Rips* since, but no one who would bear comparison with Jefferson. In private life he was a charming man, and full of those qualities that win the hearts of men.

It was my good fortune to be in Manchester during some of the Shakespearian revivals at the Prince's Theatre under Charles Calvert's management. Calvert had gifts of no common order, but he laboured against physical drawbacks which heavily handicapped him. He was a little, squat-built man, and therefore disqualified from essaying such rôles as *Macbeth*, *Antony*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, etc. And yet he played these parts, and so perfect was his acting, so excellent his elocution, that his lack of inches was condoned for. Even at this period of time, with riper judgment and wider experiences, I still consider that Calvert was a great actor. The first time I ever saw him was sometime in the early sixties. I was paying a flying visit to London, and accompanied friends one evening to the Standard Theatre in Shoreditch.

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A Mr Charles Calvert and Miss Adelaide Biddles (Mrs Calvert) were starring there. They appeared in a sensational piece, I remember, called *The Flower Girl*, and in *Triboulet: the Deformed*. I was struck by the excellence of Calvert's acting and the smallness of his stature. When years afterwards I came to know him as manager of the Prince's Theatre in Manchester, he had grown much stouter and much more subdued and refined as an actor. One of his early productions was *Macbeth*. When the play was put into rehearsal an innovation was decided upon, which was that the part of Hecate should be played by a woman, and for this purpose the services of a Miss Pauline Markham were secured. Miss Markham had been studying music, I believe, in London, but whether she had much stage experience or not I don't know. She was a most beautiful young girl, with a perfect figure and a wonderful voice. I was on the stage when she appeared for the first rehearsal. She was so overcome with nervousness that she could barely speak, let alone sing. The impression she made as an actress was far from favourable, and the company predicted failure. "It is absurd," said one, "to cast an inexperienced girl like that for such an exacting part as Hecate." "She'll simply mangle it," said another. She falsified all the gloomy forebodings, however, and took the town by storm. She was beautiful, she was talented, but that was not all: the rich, full tones of her clear, young voice thrilled those who listened to her; it was a voice of extraordinary range and compass, and

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highly cultivated. Miss Markham became the rage of Manchester. She essayed many parts, and in all was successful. Her Myles-na-Copleen, in a burlesque of the *Colleen Bawn*, was a new rôle, but proved her versatility. A great future was predicted for her, but, alas! what a tragedy was her after career. Some years passed when, still a young woman, but a wreck and despised, she was picked up in a street in Brooklyn in a dying condition, and was buried at the expense of the Actors' Association. Poor Pauline! She flashed like a meteor through the theatrical firmament, but her descent was rapid, and she died broken-hearted, and as an outcast, in a strange land. It will be remembered that she went to America with Lydia Thompson's "Blonde Burlesque Troupe," and was with Lydia when that energetic young lady cow-hided an editor in the streets of Chicago.

Among other notable productions of Calvert's was *Manfred*. As he had surprised and delighted Manchester with Shakespearian revivals, so he drew all the town to witness Byron's gloomy tragedy, staged as it had never been staged before, and as in all probability it will never be staged again. It was produced, if I remember rightly, in the early part of 1867. As far as scenic and stage effects go, it is doubtful if Manchester had ever seen anything like it. I did not witness it until it had nearly run its course, as I had to make another hasty trip to America. During the passage across the Atlantic there was an alarm of fire, and a dreadful panic ensued which,



Pauline Markham



CHARLES CALVERT AS MACBETH.

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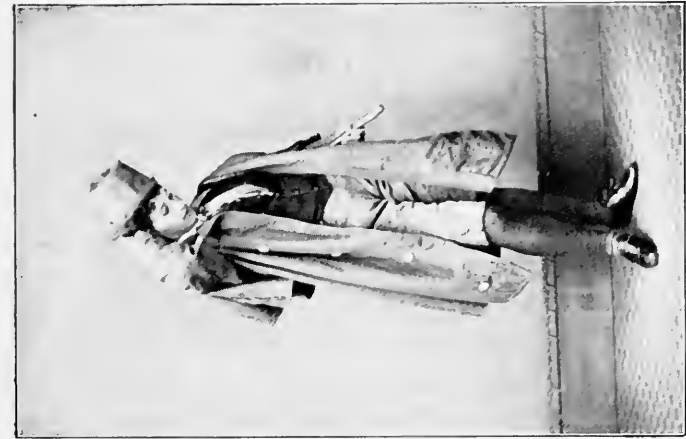
but for the courage and coolness of the captain and his officers, would have resulted in an appalling disaster. There were many emigrants on board, including a number of Germans, and they became completely demoralised. When the panic was at its height I saw a German seize a woman by her long hair, and drag her off the companion ladder as she was endeavouring to gain the deck. When he came within reach of me he turned a somersault backward, and disappeared, and I found that some skin had also disappeared from my knuckles. I always suspected that excitable German of being responsible for the loss of my skin. Subsequently I heard he had vowed that he would not be happy until he had let out my blood. But as the operation was not considered desirable, the gentleman was handcuffed, and locked up in a cabin, where I imagine his ardour cooled. Anyway, I did not see him again during the passage.

On returning from America, after a short sojourn in Manchester, I took up my residence for a time with some relatives in London, one of them being connected with the Press, and through him I made the acquaintance of the genial showman, E. P. Hingston. It was mainly through this gentleman that Artemus Ward, the greatest humorist of his age, was induced to come to London with his celebrated "Panorama." Hingston in many respects was a remarkable man. He had travelled most extensively, had been editor, actor, entrepreneur, and goodness knows what else. He and Artemus had wandered all through California, and the Wild West when it *was* wild. They toured

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Colorado, went to Salt Lake City, and were entertained by, and entertained, Brigham Young. Ward subsequently delivered a most amusing lecture on the Mormons, which was enormously successful in the States. It was the dream of his life to come to London, but he was very doubtful whether the English public would receive him kindly. He was afraid they might not appreciate his peculiar humour. However, Hingston overcame these scruples, and the two men duly arrived in London. Ward's fame had long preceded him, and the announcement that he would appear at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, London, provoked a great deal of curiosity and Press comment. Ward was a refined and courteous gentleman, tall and thin, with singularly brilliant eyes, pearly white teeth, a large Roman nose, and light hair. He was no less conspicuous by the most beautiful and perfectly shaped hands imaginable, but also they were the hands of a man doomed to an early grave. The blue veins showed through the white skin, and the nails were of the shape usually associated with a delicate constitution. Ward indeed, was already death-stricken when he came to England. Almost immediately on his arrival in London he was engaged by Mark Lemon to contribute a series of articles to *Punch*.

On Tuesday, 13th November 1866, he gave his first lecture at the Egyptian Hall. It was my privilege to be present, and at a later period to become personally acquainted with this remarkable man. The room he appeared in was the one which had formerly been occupied by Arthur Sketchley. On the night of his



PAULINE MARKHAM AS MYLES-NA-COPPLEEN.

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PAULINE MARKHAM.

39 Taken during her engagement in Manchester.

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début the place was packed, for the most part by Pressmen and friends. It was, in fact, a private show, though the demand for seats was so great that some of the public were admitted. Hundreds, however, who clamoured for admission had to go away disappointed. If the hall had been twenty times as large it could have been filled.

The humorist called his lecture "The Babes in the Wood." On a friend expressing surprise that he should so name it, as it had no earthly reference to the nursery story, he replied: "No; it hasn't, but it sounds nice, you know; though I've half a mind to call it My Seven Grandmothers, but then, of course, somebody would object that I had too many grandmothers. It is hard to please everyone, and there are so many clever people in the world ready on the slightest provocation to find fault with you."

If ever there was a genial, gentle soul, it was Artemus Ward (Charles Farrar Browne). Wit oozed out of him, and he said funny things with an apparent unconsciousness that they were funny. He never laughed himself. His face was pathetic and sad, his nature kindly and deeply sympathetic. You did not want to talk when you were in his presence; you were content to let him do the talking. His voice was clear as a bell and peculiarly magnetic; it seemed to grip you. He spoke with a very slight twang that was rather an attraction than otherwise.

On the opening night of the show Hingston introduced him in a neat little speech, and claimed the indulgence of those present for any nervousness the

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entertainer might display on this his first public appearance in London. He said it was a critical moment for Ward, and his fate trembled in the balance. Then Ward rose, came down to the footlights, and stood silent, casting his deep-set, brilliant eyes over the vast audience, and twiddling his thumbs in the most unconcerned way. A minute or two passed; under such circumstances it seemed much longer. The audience became fidgety. I heard one old gentleman sitting near me exclaim to a lady at his side: "What a fool; why doesn't he say something?" Once more silence fell upon the assembly, but the imperturbable man stood twiddling his thumbs. A murmur of disapproval swept like a wave over the audience, then a little more clapping, a little more stamping, followed by a silence during which a pin might almost have been heard to fall. At last, in his inimitable drawl, Ward spoke:

"Ladies—and—gentlemen. When—you—have finished this—unseemly interruption, I guess I'll begin my discourse."

It was as if an electric shock had passed through the people. They saw the humour of the situation. They rose to it. And seldom has a showman received such an ovation. The audience almost raised the roof with their cheers and applause, and it was fully five minutes before he could proceed. From that moment he became the idol of London.

"If I can make money enough to buy me a passage to New Zealand," he said in the course of his remarks, "I shall not have lived in vain. I don't want to live in vain. I would rather live in Margate,

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or here. But I wish when the Egyptians built this hall they had provided a little more ventilation. Perhaps the Egyptians didn't like air ; anyway, the Egyptians who built this hall didn't."

The lecture was an enormous success. He might have enjoyed public support for years, but death had already stricken him, and he had to give up the work in the ninth or tenth week, and on one or two occasions in the course of that time he had to dismiss his audience, as he was too ill to appear. It was all terribly pathetic and sad. He struggled bravely, nobly, but the fatal weakness increased. By the advice of his doctor he went for a short time to Jersey, but derived no benefit, and he wrote to one of his dearest friends in the Savage Club: "My loneliness weighs upon me." He was brought back, but was too ill to get farther than Southampton, and he stayed at Radley's Hotel. Everything was done that human skill could do, though it was all of no avail, and on the 6th March 1867, to the intense sorrow of a large circle of devoted friends, he drifted out to a better world. Poor fellow! He was a laughter-maker, and this world was the poorer when he went.

I shall have occasion to make further reference to his death, and an unhappy incident that arose out of it, when I come to deal with the Savage Club. He appointed E. P. Hingston and T. W. Robertson, the dramatic author, his executors, and as far as it was possible to do so, those two gentlemen fulfilled all his last wishes.

That Artemus Ward was a humorist of the very

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highest rank is, I venture to say, undoubted. And yet it wasn't so much what he said as the manner in which he said it. His solemn face, with his inimitable manner of telling a joke, sent his audience into fits of laughter.

In speaking of his panorama, he remarked :

"I haven't distinguished myself as an artist, but have always been mixed up in art. I have an uncle who takes photographs in his spare moments, and a servant who takes everything he can lay his hands on at any moment. At a very tender age I could draw on wood. When a mere child I once drew a small cart load of raw turnips over a wooden bridge. It was a raw morning. The people of the village noticed me. They recognised the drawing at once. They said it was a raw turnip drawing. That shows how faithfully I had copied nature. I drew their attention to it, so you see there was a lot of drawing in it. The villagers, with the wonderful discernment peculiar to villagers, said I had a future before me. As I was walking backward when I made my drawing, I replied that I thought my future must be behind me."

On another occasion, referring to a part of his panorama, he said :

"This picture is a great work of art. It is an oil painting done in petroleum. It is by the old masters. There were a lot of them, you know. At one time they were like the measles: everybody had them. This picture was the last thing they did before dying. They did it, and expired. They ought to have been

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hanged, but they weren't; they were immortalised instead, but they were a poor lot of mortals."

Of another of his so-called pictures he said :

"When I first showed this in America the audience roared for the artist. When he appeared bowing and smiling, they promptly shot him. It was a deserving end."

Another screamingly funny story was that of the living skeleton.

"I hired at immense expense," he went on, "a freak, a living skeleton. He was so thin you could see through him, and when he moved his bones rattled. I intended to exhibit him in Australia, but on the voyage he developed a prodigious appetite. He said it was the air. He ate six square meals a day, and between meals he used to stave off the pangs of hunger with a few dozen hard-boiled eggs. I told him he was a fraud, and I couldn't exhibit him as a skeleton. He wept, and ate more food. He said the sea agreed with him. There were no clothes on board the ship big enough for him. The consequence was I took him back to California, and exhibited him as the fat man. But he soon got thin again on land, so I buried him, as I had no time to make another voyage to fatten him up."

Still funnier was the story about the Mormon elder. He made the acquaintance of a very nice man in Utah, and presented him with a free pass for himself and family to come into the show. "They commenced, he and his family, to come in an hour before the show was timed to begin, and they were

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coming in for an hour after the time. They filled every seat, and then there was an overflow. I guess I lost heavily by that deal. They said they didn't think much of me as a showman, and I retorted by telling them they were the cheapest lot as an audience I had ever struck."

One of Ward's posters announcing his show ran thus :

ARTEMUS WARD DELIVERED LECTURES BEFORE ALL THE CROWNED HEADS OF EUROPE

ever thought of delivering lectures.

My acquaintance with Artemus Ward was only slight, but he fascinated me, as indeed he fascinated everyone who came to know him. He continued to joke almost up to the hour of his death. He had been projecting a journey through the Western States of America with a friend, and in order to try and cheer him up, this friend, while sitting at his bedside in Southampton, said :

"We'll do that journey yet, Artemus."

The poor fellow held up his long, thin, white, almost transparent hands, and with a grim smile, remarked :

"Do you think those hands are fit to hold the reins? Why, my dear fellow, there isn't a horse living but would laugh at them."

A few days later Artemus Ward was dead, in his

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thirty-first year, and the place he left vacant has never been filled.

In the course of '68 I once more found myself in Melbourne, and my kinsman, to whom I have already made some reference, offered to give me a position. I had personal reasons, however, for declining it, and I stayed for a time with a cousin of mine, a fine young fellow, though rather erratic. He had held an appointment in the Post Office, but had foolishly thrown it up, and was wondering what he should do next. My wandering propensities affected him, I fancy, for he very seriously proposed that I should accompany him, and tramp right across Australia to Torres Straits. It was a mad proposal, of course, for it wanted a well-organised and plentifully equipped expedition for such a journey. At that time, however, I could not see the madness of it. I deemed it quite feasible, and we began to discuss our plans. Fortunately for us perhaps, he was unexpectedly offered a very good appointment in one of the largest firms in Melbourne. This changed the whole aspect of affairs. He accepted the offer, and our tramp did not come off. I remained in the colony for a little time, and wandered about, until suddenly I took it into my head to return to England, and shipped on board a large sailing ship going round the Horn. We fell in with terrific weather, and were driven far south. One wild, black night we escaped by the skin of our teeth only, from crashing into a huge iceberg. How narrow the escape was may be determined by the fact that our flying jib-boom was carried away. I

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stood on the foc'sle during an exciting ten minutes or so, and was cut and bruised by pieces of flying ice driven before the gale. However, we managed to get clear, and once round the Horn we ran into better weather, and made a fairly good passage to London.

I had not long been at home before I was induced to purchase a London weekly local paper which had some political influence. I enlarged its sphere, and added features which increased its influence and its usefulness, I presume, since the political party it represented gave me a considerable measure of support. I also started a little monthly magazine which I called *The Coronet*. But it had a short life, due mainly to an unwitting infringement on my part of a copyright, and I was threatened with an action for damages by the late Sir Isaac Pitman. A friend of mine had undertaken to contribute some shorthand articles illustrated with certain diagrams, in which Mr Pitman claimed exclusive copyright. My friend was the late Mr E. H. Bramley, one of the cleverest shorthand writers in London. He was subsequently elected minuting clerk to the London School Board, and retained the position almost up to the time of his death, a short while ago. He strenuously maintained that Pitman had no legal right in the diagrams; but I was not prepared to stand the test of a lawsuit, so I stopped the articles, and the magazine died.

Among the many supporters of my paper was that perfect gentleman and fine soldier, Field-Marshal Sir William Gomm, G.C.B., then Constable of the Tower. He was a very old man when I made his

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acquaintance. He was born about the end of the eighteenth century, and had seen much service, including the Battle of Waterloo, being then quartermaster-general under Sir Thomas Picton. He was subsequently Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Mauritius, and later still Commander-in-Chief in India, which position he relinquished in 1855, so that he escaped the Mutiny. I have in my possession a short note—a few almost indecipherable lines—he wrote to me a short time before his death. It was probably one of the last he ever penned. He was then about ninety years of age. Sir William was a man of the most fascinating personality, singularly modest, and with an old-world courtesy that was charming.

I was also well acquainted with Colonel Beresford, M.P. for Southwark, and a wharfinger in a large way of business in Bermondsey. The Colonel was Conservative Member for the borough; but I always thought that at times he was a bit wobbly in his politics. Anyway, he was a nervous man and an exceedingly poor speaker. His speeches were carefully written for him by his secretary, and the Colonel used to make an effort to deliver them, but his nervousness was responsible for a good many ludicrous situations. On one occasion I was present at the Bridge House Hotel, Southwark, when he was to address his constituents, and there was a great uproar. He held his hat in his hand, with his MS. at the bottom of it, but he was so flurried at the manifestations of impatience on the part of the free and independent voters that he made a hopeless muddle of his speech. Then the

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meeting broke up in confusion, and a young man who had been one of the chief disturbers, dexterously planted an egg of great antiquity against the Colonel's immaculate shirt front. I was quite near him at the time, and even now I can recall the aroma of that egg. The poor Colonel was quite overcome, and beat a hasty and, it must be confessed, a somewhat ignominious retreat. On the following morning I called on him at his request, and handing me the MS. of the speech he had never delivered, he said I must print it verbatim in my paper. On my declining to do so there was a scene, but subsequently he apologised, and we became good friends.

Another of my acquaintances was Mark Lemon, who in the early days of my editorship was appearing publicly in a monologue entertainment, in which he represented that amusing old rascal, Sir John Falstaff. He was a big, heavy man, rather slow and ponderous in his movements. I once heard him tell a story of an encounter he had with a footpad. "And what did you do?" asked somebody. "Oh, I fell on him." "With what result?" "He was in the hospital for six weeks," answered the cheery Mark. If the story was true, the footpad was fortunate in escaping with his life.

It was also my privilege to know Shirley Brooks, and Blanchard Jerrold, who was a most delightful companion and an exceedingly clever man. Blanchard succeeded his father as editor of *Lloyds*, and in this connection I may refer to a well-authenticated incident which testifies to the big-heartedness of Douglas Jerrold.

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When Mr Edward Lloyd asked him to undertake the editorship of *Lloyds' Weekly Newspaper*, he at first declined, without giving any adequate reason. But the reason, as was subsequently proved, was that poor E. P. Hingston, who was down on his luck, was temporarily editing the paper, and Douglas did not wish to throw him out of employment. Douglas Jerrold did subsequently occupy the editorial chair, and at his death he was succeeded by his eldest son, William Blanchard, who was a most voluminous writer, and contributed largely to contemporary literature. It is not generally known that George Augustus Sala was also connected with Mr Lloyd's establishment, and used to illustrate the cheap stories which were then issued by the firm. That was before G. A. S. took to writing. I became acquainted with Blanchard Jerrold at the time that his comedy *Cupid in Waiting* was being performed at the Royalty Theatre. George Augustus Sala was another of my acquaintances, and at a subsequent period I became intimate with him. Then there were Tom Hood, the younger, editor of *Fun*; Henry Sampson, his sub-editor, and subsequently founder and editor of that clever paper *The Referee*; William Brunton, a well-known artist and cartoonist for *Fun*; Henry Van Laun, the brilliant linguist and translator; William Tinsley, the well-known publisher; Christopher Pond, the presiding genius of the firm of Spiers & Pond; the erratic and clever "Jack" O'Shea of *The Standard*, and many another genial and clever Bohemian, all of whom have passed to a better world.

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At a later stage I was present at the Hanover Square Rooms, when Mark Twain made his bow to the London Press. His coming had been heralded by much flourishing of trumpets, but, speaking for myself, I was greatly disappointed. Perhaps it was that I was prejudiced. Anyway, I compared him with Artemus Ward, greatly to the disadvantage of Twain, who seemed to me to copy Ward's methods without success. In 1873 another distinguished American visitor came to London in the person of Joachim Miller, the "Poet of the Sierras," a rugged, long-haired son of genius, in whom the poetic fire burned fiercely. He was a singularly picturesque and striking figure, a native of California, and he seemed somehow to carry about with him the magnificent tonic atmosphere of the Sierras of which he sang so sweetly. I liked the man, and we became friendly. We had both roughed it, and could talk travel, so there was a bond of sympathy between us. He was a genial optimist, looked at the bright side of everything, and seemed to overflow with animal spirits.

One evening we forgathered when I was labouring under some sense of depression. Possibly I had an attack of liver ; anyway, I expressed an opinion that I had missed my way in life, and drawn a blank. He badgered me a good deal, and the following day, or the day after that, I forget which, he handed me an exquisite little poem, which I reproduce here, although I believe it now appears in his collected poems. I think, however, that I may claim to have inspired it.

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TO THOSE WHO FAIL

All honour to him who shall win the prize,
The world has cried for a thousand years ;
But to him who tries, and who fails and dies,
I give great honour and glory and tears.

Give honour and glory and pitiful tears
To all who fail in their deeds sublime ;
The ghosts are many in the van of years,
They were born with time in advance of time.

Oh, great is the hero who wins a name,
But greater many and many a time
Some pale-faced fellow who dies in shame,
And lets God finish the thoughts sublime.

And great is the man with a sword undrawn,
And good is the man who refrains from wine,
But the man who fails and yet still fights on,
Lo, he is the twin-born brother of mine.

Much water has flowed beneath the bridges since the little incident I have here related, but the rugged poet is still in the flesh, I believe. No doubt he has long since forgotten me, but he made far too deep an impression on my mind for me to forget him. We may never meet again, but if, perchance, he reads these lines he will know that one of his early friends in England remembers him with affection. Another man with whom I was particularly intimate in those far-off days was Captain Mayne Reid. Many a time and oft have we forgathered in what was then a famed Fleet Street hostelry. If ever there was an optimistic Bohemian of the good old type, it was Mayne Reid.

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He suffered from chronic impecuniosity, for he and money couldn't hold together. He used to say that those who hoarded money only existed. The man who wanted to live spent his money. I remember on one occasion he obtained a considerable sum, several hundreds of pounds, for some copyrights. The money was paid by a crossed cheque, and as Reid had no banking account there was a difficulty in the way of getting money immediately, which was an all-important matter. Reid was in a hurry to chink the golden sovereigns together. He had asked two or three people to cash the cheque, but an objection was raised in every case. I happened to meet him at the psychological moment ; he told me his difficulties, and explained that though legally entitled to the amount set forth on the slip of paper, which was in his pocket-book, the ready money exchequer, owing to an extraordinary leakage, was reduced to the last penny, which he retained there in order that he might be afforded protection from the wiles and artifices of his satanic majesty. It chanced, however, that I had more than a penny ; so, like loyal men, we drank the health of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, and then proceeded by cab to the city, where a merchant friend of mine undertook to pass the cheque through his bank, and generously advanced a sum sufficient for immediate needs. In a moment of generosity, as soon as he received the full amount of his cheque, Reid invited me to make a tour of the world with him. I suggested that the wealth at his command would hardly suffice for our wants during such

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a journey. "Not suffice," he exclaimed, "not suffice for two men like us, who can sleep on clothes-lines, and sup off maggots!" The tour, of course, was not undertaken, and in a short time my dear friend had spent his last dollar, and was dreaming dreams again. I remember discussing a plan with him which, if I didn't originate, I was one of the first to give it practical shape. The increase of morning and evening papers was making it more and more difficult for weekly journals to keep up their circulation. The weekly reader was beginning to demand more than a mere rechauffage of the week's news; I therefore proposed supplying the small fry throughout the country with fiction for simultaneous publication. We discussed the idea with Wilkie Collins, who was a warm friend of Reid's, and he highly approved of it. I proceeded at once to carry it out as far as I was concerned. It chanced that a man had been captured in India who was supposed to be the notorious Nana Sahib, the "Butcher of Cawnpore," and Gordon Thompson, who was one of the survivors of the Cawnpore massacre, was on his way up country from Calcutta to identify him. The excitement in England was great, and taking advantage of it, I rapidly wrote a story of the Indian Mutiny under the title of "The Great White Hand," and offered it to the weekly Press. The success of my enterprise far exceeded my anticipations—that story turned me over from first to last about £1500—and applications for more fiction came to me by almost every post. It was about that time that Messrs Tillotson of Bolton came

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into existence as "Purveyors of fiction," and they entered into a contract with me. But when it expired I again had command of a very large clientèle. "Purveyors," however, and agencies cropped up by dozens and scores, and soon the game wasn't worth the candle. Among my very early clients was the late Mr Charles Alexander, then proprietor of *The Dundee Weekly News* and *Daily Courier*. I have a letter before me from Mr Alexander with reference to a serial, in which he says: "Our weekly circulation is about 17,000 or 18,000 a week, and if you can raise it we shall recognise your services in a very substantial way." It is gratifying to me to be able to say that I did raise the circulation. However, this is somewhat anticipating, and I shall have occasion to refer to my connection with Dundee later on.

CHAPTER IV

I witness the execution of another woman—The fire-eaters—A threatened fight, and how it ended—Opening of the Criterion—Death of my friend, Tom Hood—I make the acquaintance of Benjamin Ward Richardson and George Cruikshank—The latter dances the Highland Fling for me when he was over eighty—I stop my paper, and join James Henderson's staff—Become a special correspondent of *The Hour*—The Bravo mystery—Am present at the exhumation of the body—Am sent to meet the Prince of Wales on his home-coming from India—Amusing experience with Archibald Forbes—I proceed to Scotland—*The Greenock Advertiser*.

IN a previous chapter I mentioned that I witnessed the execution of the notorious poisoner, Catherine Wilson. About the end of 1870 it fell to my lot to be present at the hanging of another woman—the no less notorious Margaret Waters, the baby farmer. She was convicted in September of that year, and sentenced to death. The penalty was carried out in the courtyard of the Old Horse-monger Lane Jail, and, if I am not mistaken, was the first execution in private in London of a woman after the passing of the Act abolishing executions in public. Unlike Catherine Wilson, the convict in this instance was a little, ugly woman. Nor did she display any of the courage which Wilson had shown. Indeed, Margaret Waters was so overcome as the hour of her doom approached that she had to be fortified with stimulants. As she emerged from the condemned

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cell she was a pitiable object, and was almost carried to the scaffold. Twice during the short journey she faltered, and would have stumbled had she not been supported. An instant or so before the bolt was pulled she pitched forward, and must have been half strangled before the trap fell. There were about eight or nine reporters present, and two of them were so overcome that they fainted.

From 1870 to 1874 I carried on my paper. During that period my first book was published by Tinsley Brothers. It had been running as a serial; William Tinsley had read it, and made me an offer for the book rights, which I accepted, having faith in his judgment.

The book was a dismal failure, though that didn't prevent Samuel Tinsley, the brother of William, who had set up a business on his own account in Catherine Street, from publishing a second book from my pen, which proved more successful, and ran into two or three three-volume editions.

I have elsewhere made passing reference to Thomas Hood, the distinguished son of a distinguished father, who was as gentle a creature as ever breathed the breath of life. He had beautiful features, and dark, pathetic eyes, like those of a gazelle. At the time I knew him he was editing *Fun*. Henry Sampson was the sub-editor, and William Brunton, a very clever artist, the cartoonist. Hood had published a book; the title of it, if I remember rightly, was "The Golden Heart." It was rather roughly handled in *The Weekly Dispatch*. The

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writer of the slating notice was supposed to be a man named Sydney French. Poor Hood's morbidly sensitive nature was terribly hurt, and he vowed to have Sydney French's blood. For Hood, who couldn't hurt a worm, to talk of having anyone's blood was really comical. Moreover, French was a little, delicate man, suffering from a mortal disease, and with no more fight in him than a frost-bitten butterfly. But when he heard that Hood was going about seeking to devour him, he smote his narrow chest, and declared that he would break the valiant Tom into minute particles. It afforded Fleet Street a good deal of amusement. If little French happened to be in one of the haunts, someone would slip in and whisper in his ear that Hood was coming, and very soon French would mysteriously disappear. On the other hand, Hood was warned not to enter such and such a place, as French was there panting for the encounter, and Hood would suddenly remember that he had a pressing engagement in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, the two gentle penmen breathed fire and slaughter, and right valiantly did they bear themselves. Then the longed-for opportunity for the deadly encounter did arrive. Messrs Spiers & Pond threw open their splendid Criterion premises to the Press on a memorable Saturday prior to the public opening on the following Monday. The Criterion was a new departure for London. There had never been anything like it before, and the conception of it by Mr Pond (for I believe he originated it) reflected the highest credit upon his enterprise.

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He and his partner, Mr Spiers, determined that the new premises should be inaugurated in a manner befitting such a huge undertaking. Something like a thousand invitations were issued, including editors of the principal papers throughout the country. It was Liberty Hall for the nonce, with unbounded hospitality. Invitations to the Press had been sent out broadcast, and, of course, the two deadly enemies were there, each with his crowd of sympathisers, who urged him to give no quarter, show no mercy. Each was well primed with champagne to strengthen him for the deadly struggle, and gradually, with many words of warning from his respective backers to be on his guard, and much advice as to how the foe was to be reduced to uselessness, the two were brought together. In this matter Henry Sampson, who was an amateur bruiser, played a prominent part, and the agony was worked up to a melodramatic pitch. The opponents were brought together in the large hall. Hood's usually pallid face was slightly flushed, and his dreamy, pathetic eyes a little more brilliant than they were wont to be. French was trembling like an aspen leaf, and looked very mournful and unhappy. The fire-eaters faced each other, and were surrounded with an eager and sniggering crowd. "Now then, you fellows," roared somebody, "buck up, and begin the slaughtering. You are wasting valuable time. We've got the sweepers ready to gather up the pieces and clear the mess away."

"I say, French, did you write that slating notice of my book?" began Tom Hood sweetly and mildly.

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“No, old chap; I didn’t,” replied French, no less mildly.

“Oh, I thought you did,” remarked Tom. “Well, come and join me in a bottle of champagne.”

The invitation was readily accepted, and thus the expected deadly encounter ended happily, and there was much chaff. It was all very comical; but there was an undertone of sadness running through the farce, for both men were nearing the end of their earthly pilgrimage. French died a few months later, and it was not long before Tom Hood followed him into the shadows. Poor Tom! A day or two before his death I sat by his bedside in his pretty little room facing Peckham Rye, and incidently asked him what was really the nature of his complaint. With a sweet smile on his sunken face, and in a voice that would not rise above a whisper, he replied:

“The doctor tells me it’s something the matter with the colon, so, of course, there will be a co(m)ma and then a full stop.”

A few hours later he had passed into an unconscious state, and the following day Tom Hood’s brief life came to an end. He was laid to rest in Nunhead Cemetery.

Hood was born at Wanstead in Essex in 1835, and received his education at University College School and Louth Grammar School; in 1853 he was entered as a commoner at Pembroke College, Oxford, where he passed all the examinations for the degree, but for some reason or other he never took his B.A. He wrote many books, including several for children.

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He founded and conducted *Tom Hood's Comic Annual*, to which I was a contributor in its later years. He was the editor of *Fun*, and edited many editions of his famous father's works. To know Tom Hood was to love him. His nature was that of a sweet and lovable child. He had a passion for flowers, and was never without a little bouquet in his button-hole. Another friend of mine in those memorable years was Mr (afterwards Sir) Benjamin Ward Richardson, a clever and original man, with great personality. He was the discoverer of the ether spray application for the local abolition of pain in operation, and, I believe, introduced the anæsthetic known as methylene bichloride. He strongly advocated the humane slaughtering of animals intended for food by means of electricity, and also discovered a process for making silk without the aid of the silkworm, and experimentally he produced a square yard of material, which to all intents and purposes was silk. He then went to Liverpool, he told me, to lecture on his discovery, and with justifiable pride exhibited his piece of silk, or whatever it was; but one of his audience, a north country silk trader, bluntly called him a fool for his pains, and advised him to keep his secret to himself if it was worth anything at all, for if he could produce silk to sell cheaply he could reap an enormous fortune, and enrich himself and his family. Richardson took the hint, but for some reason or other did not pursue his researches into the artificial production of silk any further. I think he found it was too costly.

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Mr Richardson was not only a deep thinker, but a brilliant conversationalist, with a frank, open disposition and a gentle, kindly nature. Although a popular physician, he detested conventionalism, and after his consulting hours loved to be "At home" in his rooms in Manchester Square to intellectual Bohemians who cared to drop in for half-an-hour's chat. Those who had the privilege of entrée to these informal gatherings were sure of meeting the leading lights of literature, art, and science. Among the many people whose acquaintance I made in Richardson's rooms was old George Cruikshank, the celebrated artist and caricaturist, and a little incident in which he figured is worth recording. I called one afternoon when it chanced that the only other guest was Cruikshank. I happened incidentally to remark that I wasn't very well, when Cruikshank, in his genial manner, exclaimed: "What, not well! A powerful young fellow like you ought to be ashamed of yourself to talk of being unwell. Here, let me see you do this." He sprang up, took the tongs and poker from the fireplace, crossed them on the floor like swords, and then whistling his own air, danced a Highland sword dance with great agility and accuracy, keeping it up for at least a quarter of an hour. As he threw himself into a chair, somewhat exhausted by his efforts, he said: "Now then, when I'm dead you can say you saw old Cruikshank when he was over eighty years of age dance the Sword Dance in Dr Richardson's room."

For a man of his years it was certainly a marvellous

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performance. He used to attribute his vigour and energy to his abstention from alcohol in any shape or form. As is well known, Cruikshank carried his teetotal principles to almost extreme lengths, and he endeavoured to enforce them by his "illustrations," such as "The Bottle," "The Gin Trap," etc., but it is not so well known that at one period of his career he had been a pretty free drinker. A story was current, and I have reason to believe it was based on fact, that he had been converted to temperance in rather a forcible manner. The man who was destined to imperishably carve his name on Fame's Roll had been with some boon companions somewhere, and entered a tavern near the British Museum late one afternoon. It chanced that a soldier in uniform was standing at the bar, accompanied by a young woman. Cruikshank addressed some offensive remarks to the young woman or the soldier himself; anyway, the soldier resented it, and promptly knocked the artist down with a tremendous blow that fractured his nose. Saddened, sobered, and subdued, Cruikshank arose, apologised to the soldier, and suffering from a sense of shame that almost drove him mad, he wended his way home, registering a mental vow that never again would he allow a drop of strong drink to pass his lips. How rigidly the vow was kept the world knows. Cruikshank had a wonderful sense of humour and a quaint way of expressing himself. He would keep a room full of company in roars of laughter by funny stories, of which he seemed to possess an inexhaustible fund; while in his ability

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as a caricaturist he was unique. Certainly he had no rival in his day in his own particular line. For many years he lived in the Hampstead Road, where I often visited him; and there he died in 1878, aged about eighty-six. George Cruikshank represented a School of Art which no longer exists, or at anyrate it has undergone such changes that Cruikshank's style is now considered obsolete and old-fashioned. But in his day and generation he was an influence that was not without its effects on the cause he espoused with so much warmth and energy.

After carrying on my paper for nearly four years I stopped its publication, and soon afterwards accepted an engagement from the late James Henderson in *The Weekly Budget* office. I sub-edited *The Mirror*, a high-class weekly journal, under the editorship of William Sawyer, who wrote much creditable verse. I also contributed to *The Weekly Budget*, then circulating about half-a-million a week, and *The Young Folks' Budget*, edited by a Miss Holland, a lady of marked ability. Notwithstanding my work in connection with these publications, I took charge for a time of the huge despatch department in connection with the establishment. Mr Henderson, who had risen from a humble position, had built up a magnificent business, and managed to secure the services of some capable men, including Tom Hood (the younger); Crawford Wilson, poet and novelist; Charles Gibbon, the novelist; John Proctor, the cartoonist; Henry Lee, a very able writer, and others who, if now forgotten, were prominent enough at that period.

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When *The Mirror* had run into a third volume Mr Henderson quite suddenly stopped it, not because it was not paying, but because it was not paying enough. Moreover, he had conceived the scheme of *Funny Folks*, which was immediately issued; but with the stoppage of *The Mirror* I resigned my position, and soon afterwards joined the staff of the new daily Conservative paper *The Hour*, under Captain Hamber's editorship. I also helped my friend, the late Thomas Wilson Reid, for many years manager of *The Sportsman*, to edit *The London Scottish Journal*, which he had just started when *The Sportsman*, which had been the property of Mr James Smith, passed into the possession of Mr Ashley. I also managed to turn out a considerable quantity of copy every week to keep my serialising syndicate going. I was certainly leading a very strenuous life, and my duties in connection with *The Hour* took me abroad a good deal. Perhaps the most important work I did for the paper was a series of articles which exposed the scandal of the "London Dead Houses." In some parishes the only place for a *post mortem* was a railway arch, and bodies taken out of the Thames were often placed in an open cart, and dragged half across London, before they could be temporarily deposited for the purpose of examination and inquest. This state of matters had long been a crying evil, and though the duties involved me in some gruesome work, and I often had to witness revolting sights, I entered on the task with zeal, and had the satisfaction of subsequently witnessing the beginning of the reform which made it

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compulsory that every parish should have proper mortuary chambers, with all the necessary sanitary and other arrangements for the medical examinations of the bodies which were the subjects of inquests.

My *Hour* experiences also embraced attendance at the second inquest held on the body of Mr Bravo, which was exhumed after being in its grave in the Norwood Cemetery for three months. The "Bravo Case" was one of the most remarkable sensations of the day, and aroused interest from John O'Groats to Land's End. As more than a generation has passed since this weird tragedy sent a thrill through the land, and most of those who figured in it have gone into the night, it may not be without interest if I recall some of the leading incidents of the story of love and hate, intrigue and deception, sordidness and crime, which were unfolded in a Coroner's Court in the burning days of July and August 1876. It was a thrilling romance of real life that put fiction completely in the shade ; but I have always maintained there is no such thing as fiction.

Mr Charles Delauney Turner Bravo, son of a West India merchant, was a barrister in the Temple, and under thirty years of age, when he met a charming young widow, a Mrs Florence Ricardo, who had been the wife of a Captain Ricardo, a dipsomaniac. She was a Miss Campbell before her marriage, and when she married she was very young and very pretty. Ricardo had been a captain in the Grenadier Guards, and was a man of means ; his mother was Lady Catherine Ricardo, and his father a well-known

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politician ; the bride therefore seemed fortunate, and was congratulated on having made such an excellent match. The marriage took place in 1864, when Florence was about eighteen years of age. For some time they were happy enough, until the husband began to drink, and suffered from attacks of delirium tremens. About 1870, after one of these attacks, Mr and Mrs Ricardo went to Malvern to an establishment kept by a Dr Gully, who had known the Campbell family for many years, and there is no doubt Gully took advantage of Mrs Ricardo's strained relations with her husband to ingratiate himself in her favour, and there is also no doubt a liaison was commenced that was destined to lead to disastrous results. In 1871 Florence had separated herself from her husband, and in the course of that year Ricardo died in delirium tremens at Cologne.

For the next three years or so Mrs Ricardo was estranged from her family owing to her connection with Dr Gully. She had gone to live at Balham, and ultimately took the lease of a quaint old house known as the Priory, beautifully situated on the edge of Streatham Common. Mrs Ricardo having plenty of money, furnished the place in an expensive and luxurious way. Here Dr Gully, who was an old man, visited her. At this period she, too, became a dipsomaniac ; and a mysterious person, a Mrs Cox, had appeared upon the scene as a companion to the young widow, over whom she seemed to acquire great influence. When Mrs Ricardo and Mrs Cox began their connection it is difficult to say, but the

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two had travelled about a good deal with Dr Gully not only in England, but on the Continent. It was after the widow went to the Priory that she met Bravo. She and Mrs Cox, who was a woman well advanced in years, and had several children, went to Brighton, where Bravo was also staying. Mrs Cox had lived in Jamaica, the home of Bravo senior, and Cox had been acquainted with him in that island. She was the means of introducing Mr Charles Bravo and Mrs Ricardo at Brighton, where the intimacy sprang up. This would be in the autumn of 1875. Mrs Ricardo, Mrs Cox, and Dr Gully in the course of that year had made a prolonged tour on the Continent. On coming back the two women went to Eastbourne, and thence to Brighton, where Bravo and Mrs Ricardo seem to have fallen in love with each other. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the details of their courtship. Bravo visited her at the Priory, and in December of that year they were married. Almost from the first, as was inevitable, unpleasantness arose. Bravo seems to have objected to Mrs Cox, whose influence over Mrs Bravo was very great. Such an ill-assorted match could not fail to end in misery. Mrs Bravo's life had been wrecked and spoilt. She had formed an intimacy with Gully, a man almost old enough to be her grandfather; she had fallen under the influence of Mrs Cox, a married woman with children; and Mrs Cox no doubt found herself in a snug position, and was averse to being reduced to the rank of a mere dependant. Another reason why the marriage was likely to prove an

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unhappy one was that Mrs Bravo had given way to drink.

A period of about five months passed, and matters grew worse at the Priory. Then came a fatal day, the 18th of April 1876. Bravo dined with his wife and Mrs Cox at the Priory, and was waited on by the butler. Bravo partook of burgundy with his dinner, and soon after the meal was over, and the things had been cleared away, Charles Bravo was seized with sudden and mysterious illness, a pronounced symptom of which was violent vomiting, The services of a local practitioner were secured, who at once recognised the seriousness of the illness, and suggested that Sir William Gull should be summoned. This was done, and the eminent physician came to the conclusion that Bravo was doomed, and that he was suffering from the effects of poison, though what the poison was could not then be determined.

On the 21st of April Charles Bravo, a young and active man, with excellent prospects, who had only been married about five months, lay dead in the Priory. It was a painful and mysterious tragedy, and as poison had undoubtedly been the cause of death, an inquest was necessary. The verdict at the inquest was an open one, and Charles Delauney Turner Bravo was buried in a private grave in Norwood Cemetery. The verdict satisfied no one. The unhappy man had succumbed to that terrible poison tartar emetic. There was not a tittle of evidence tending to prove that he might have swallowed the fatal drug accidentally, but there was every

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reason for believing that the tartar emetic was in the burgundy he drank with his dinner on that fatal 18th of April. It was therefore a question whether it was administered to him with criminal intent, or whether he had purposely taken it with a view to destroying his own life.

On the 26th of June 1876 a Government order was issued that the body should be exhumed, and a fresh inquest held. The order was made in deference to popular clamour, and the Government were also influenced perhaps, by certain ominous rumours of foul play. It would be almost impossible to exaggerate the sensation this order caused. The position of the parties concerned, and the remarkable circumstances of the case, gave it an importance in the public estimation that otherwise it would not have had. Of course, all the papers were on the *qui vive* for good "copy," and my editor, Captain Hamber of *The Hour*, asked me to devote special attention to the case, and was particularly anxious that I should be present at the exhumation. I found, however, that the most stringent regulations had been made, and the officials of the cemetery were instructed that under no pretence whatever was any representative of the Press to be admitted. I tried various little subterfuges to get the blind side of the Home Office, but failed. I was determined, however, to see that exhumation and describe it; and it had been a habit with me throughout my life to accomplish what I had resolved upon, if accomplishment was possible. The labour of opening the grave

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and disinterring the body, which had then been underground for nearly three months, was to commence soon after midnight. It was summer-time, and between twelve and one on that memorable morning a number of men carrying lanterns, pickaxes, mattocks, and crowbars were admitted cautiously at the main entrance of the cemetery. One of the men was a slouching, raggedly dressed fellow. His arms were bare, and he wore a leather strap round his left wrist. He was smoking a short clay pipe, and carried his tools as if to the manner born. I was that man, and the following extract from my descriptive article, which appeared in the issue of *The Hour* for 13th July 1876, will testify that I was successful in my efforts to witness the exhumation. How I managed it need not be revealed.

Extract from *The Hour* newspaper of 13th July 1876 :

“The grave where the deceased man’s body has for eleven weeks rested, is situated in a very pretty part of the cemetery, beneath the shadow of some trees, and on rising ground which commands a wide sweep of country. The grave is a brick one, ten feet deep, and the clayey earth having caked hard down, pick and shovel had to be applied vigorously before it could be removed. As soon as the coffin, which was scarcely soiled, was reached, it was raised to the surface, and placed in a tent by the graveside, where the undertakers were ready to open it. The outer

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covering was unscrewed, and that done the leaden case was cut away about one-third of its length. Then a large square was marked on the lid of the inner shell, and several holes drilled to admit a fine saw. As the wood was over an inch in thickness, the task of cutting out the square was one of considerable difficulty. At least an hour was consumed, as, for obvious reasons, the saw had to be worked very gently and deliberately. When the operation was completed and the square block removed, a painful sight met the gaze of those whose duty compelled them to be present. During lifetime Mr Bravo had been noted for being, what is generally termed, a handsome man. His features indicated refinement and intelligence; but when they were exposed to the light of the sun again yesterday, a brown mummified, almost unrecognisable mass, was all there was to be seen. The rapid hand of decay had wiped the beauty of the face away, and left in its place a something that is indescribable, and yet a something that, having no voice, was nevertheless an eloquent sermon on the brief span of our mortal life, and the terrible lot that awaits the human form divine when death claims it.

“It was altogether a strange scene, with a touch of weirdness about it. A strong breeze was blowing, and the leaves of the trees seemed to keep up a melancholy and monotonous dirge. The fire in a plumber’s brazier smoked and burned near the tent, and various tools necessary for the ghastly work were scattered about, while the grave, whitewashed and

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cleaned, yawned a few feet away. Flowers were there too, in profusion, and tall white marble columns were in striking contrast to the bright green grass. High overhead, from an almost cloudless sky, the sun shone clear and warm, and birds filled the air with song. A singular and suggestive incident was the inadvertent placing by one of the workmen of a large jar of carbolic acid near the coffin. The jar bore a label, and printed on it in bold red letters was the word 'Poison.'

"That Bravo died by poison is a fact beyond all doubt. But whether that poison was administered by his own or some other hand, is the apparently inscrutable mystery that the legal acumen which will be brought to bear on the case will endeavour to solve. It is more than possible, however, that the case may go down to posterity for all time as a riddle unsolved."

While the newly empanelled jury, who had been brought down by special train, were viewing the decayed remains, a little incident occurred which had in it a touch of humour. I noticed that from behind an upright tombstone some distance away a head, covered with a mass of tangled reddish hair, kept bobbing up and down like a jack-in-the-box. Curious to know what this meant, I strolled slowly towards the spot. Squatted down behind the stone was a shabby, dissipated, black-eyed-looking individual with a nose like a boiled beetroot. He was engaged in making a sketch of the scene.

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"Hullo!" I exclaimed, scarcely able to suppress a laugh, "what are you doing here?"

"Can't you see, guvnor," he answered, "I'm making a sketch. Now don't give a bloke away."

"But how did you get in here?"

"Been here since yesterday afternoon. Hid myself when it was time to close the gates, and all I've had to eat and drink is a bottle of rum and a biscuit. Now don't give us away."

"I've no intention of giving you away," I replied; "but tell me, what journal do you represent?"

"*The Police News*, guvnor, *The Police News*. Now look here, stand with the crowd and I'll put you in the picture, and your missus and the kids will be proud of you."

As I had no desire to be immortalised through the medium of *The Police News*, I declined to stand with the crowd, but I could not resist congratulating the Bardolphian artist on his enterprise. I felt as if a little of the lustre of my own achievement had been taken away by this distinguished representative of the Press, who had spent the whole night and part of a day among the tombs, in the interest of the artistic journal he represented so ably, and had sustained his flagging energies with such humble fare as a biscuit and a bottle of rum.

The second inquest was opened at the Bedford Hotel, Balham, not far from the "Priory" which was the scene of the tragedy. There was a brilliant array of legal gentlemen, including Mr (now Sir) George Lewis, the Attorney-General, Mr Gorst, Q.C., Mr

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Poland for the Treasury, Sir Henry James, Q.C., Mr Biron, Mr Murphy, Q.C., Mr Bray, Mr Serjeant Parry, Mr Archibald Smith, and others.

The inquiry lasted about three weeks. I attended every day from the opening of the Court to its close, and wrote on an average two columns of descriptive matter for my paper every evening. The verdict of the jury was : " Murder against some person or persons unknown."

That Charles Delauney Turner Bravo was cruelly murdered no one who heard the evidence, and the examination of the chief actors in the grim drama, could for a moment doubt. But as I predicted was likely to be the case, the riddle remains unsolved to the present time. Those whose duty it was to inquire into the mystery were well aware around whom suspicion centred, but no chain of legal evidence could be forged that would secure conviction. A generation has passed, and Mrs Bravo, Mrs Cox, Dr Gully, Bravo's father, and many of the relatives of both parties, who gave evidence, have passed, taking their secrets with them, and the murderer of Mr Bravo has escaped earthly justice.

My work on *The Hour* was of a very varied character, and in the interests of the paper I made several journeys to France and other parts of the Continent. I spent some time in the island of St Michael, one of the Azores, making meteorological observations and studying its climate, and subsequently embodied my experiences in a series of articles. I also collected a great deal of the folk-

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lore of the island, and my good friend, the late Richard Gowing, used several of the quaint and weird stories I had got together in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, which he was then editing. But there is another episode of that period which I fancy is sufficiently interesting to be given in detail.

The Prince of Wales, now His Most Gracious Majesty Edward VII., was returning from his extensive tour through India. He was voyaging towards Portsmouth in the magnificent old troopship *Serapis*.

For some time great preparations had been in progress at Portsmouth for his reception. I received instructions from Captain Hamber a day or two before the expected arrival to proceed to Portsmouth, and use every possible means to get on board the *Serapis*, so as to witness and describe the meeting between the Prince and the Princess. The Princess was to go out in the Royal Yacht, and welcome her husband home somewhere off the Needles. Another yacht, the *Fire Queen*, at the service of the Admiral who had charge of all the dock arrangements—Admiral Elliott—was also to be ready at the wharf of the principal dockyard to convey a very distinguished party of guests from London who had been invited by the Prince to lunch with him on board the *Serapis*. These guests were to be brought from London by special train, and immediately they had embarked the *Fire Queen* was to steam down to the Needles. The Press arrangements included the erection of a large stand on the wharf where the Prince and Princess would land, and each newspaper representa-

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tive was provided with special permits for entrance into the dock and a ticket for the stand. On my arrival in the town I learnt that no Pressmen would be allowed to board the *Serapis*. Remembering my instructions, I was determined to try and succeed where others might fail. Seldom had so many Press representatives been gathered at Portsmouth as were brought together on this occasion. It was a great event. The heir to the throne of the most magnificent Empire the world has ever known was returning to his country and his family after far wanderings through the glorious land of India, and history was being made. The chief rendezvous for the newspaper men was at the "Kepple's Head," and there I kept my ears open to catch such gossip as might be current. There was a good deal of grumbling about the restrictions imposed, and I gathered that no one was likely to get to the *Serapis* unless he had received a special invitation from the Prince. Conspicuous by his absence was the redoubtable Archibald Forbes, the special correspondent of *The Daily News*, and speculation was rife as to why he did not turn up. Knowing Forbes, I was convinced that he had a card up his sleeve, and I became more and more determined to trump it if I could. By a good deal of diplomatic finesse, aided by a letter of introduction to a person high in authority, I seemed in a fair way to accomplish my desire. In the course of the afternoon of the day preceding that on which the vessel was timed to arrive, I received a mysterious message requesting me to repair to a certain place at a certain

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time. Of course, I went, and met "My friend at Court." I was furnished with a special pass which was potent enough to gain me admission into the dockyard at midnight. In addition, I had a letter of introduction to the Captain of the *Fire Queen*—Staff Commander Pounds, if I remember rightly—which was to lie all night at the wharf with her steam up, ready to start for sea in the morning as soon as the special train arrived with the guests of the Prince.

I went back to the inn with a feeling of elation, and spent the evening with my colleagues. Among them was the late Charles Williams, then representing *The Standard*. He was much exercised in his mind about his great rival Forbes, and incidentally he expressed a fear that Forbes would obtain access to the *Serapis*; whereupon stupidly, though in a half joking way, I said: "Well, if Forbes is there, I won't be far behind him." The result of this remark was I had to stand a good deal of chaff couched in language which, if not polite, was at least expressive. However, I consoled myself with the reflection that probably before many hours had passed the laugh would be on my side; and I have always held that those who laugh last laugh longest.

A little before midnight I slipped out, and made my way to the docks, where my magic open sesame obtained for me speedy entrance, and with an admonition to be careful how I went ringing in my ears, I made my way to where the *Fire Queen* was berthed. The little journey was not without risk, for the night was very dark, the dock was ill lighted, and my path was beset with ropes, lumber, and impediments usually

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found in a large dockyard. My seafaring life, however, had familiarised me with such things, and I reached the *Fire Queen's* berth whole and sound, with the exception of a bruised shin caused by my having in a particularly dark spot, fouled the fluke of an old anchor lying on the wharf. On gaining the gangway of the yacht, I was challenged by the sentry, but my magic pass, and a statement that I had a letter to deliver to the Captain, procured me access to the deck, where I was told to wait. My letter was passed on, and in a few minutes I was conducted to the commander's cabin, where a bluff, handsome gentleman in full uniform received me with a handshake which left me in no doubt as to the warmth of my welcome. It was the middle watch, but my genial host informed me that he had no intention of retiring, and unless I was fatigued and desired to rest, he would be glad of my company. In those days I was a stranger to fatigue, and as it was not the first time I had kept a middle watch, we fell to discussing the affairs of the nation as well as a bottle of excellent wine, and surrounded ourselves with a halo of fragrant smoke. The night passed pleasantly, the dawn came—a blustery, squally dawn, though with promise of a fine day. But it was after ten o'clock before the “special” train from London steamed into the docks. A large number of notabilities walked along the crimson carpet and came on board; the last of them all were old Sir John Bennett and Archibald Forbes. The latter greeted me with an exclamation: “What the —— are you doing here?” “On the same lay as

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yourself, my friend," I replied. It was only too evident that my presence seriously disconcerted Mr Forbes, and our relations from that moment were strained. As soon as ever the guests were all aboard, the *Fire Queen* steamed away. A magnificent breakfast had been prepared, and when all the ladies and gentlemen had gone down to the saloon I was asked by the Captain to intimate to Forbes that a seat was reserved for him. He declined, however, to avail himself of it. It was my distinguished privilege to sit next to Sir Bartle Frere, whom I knew to be a great authority on South African matters. I was greatly charmed with him, and I venture to suppose that he regarded me with some small interest. Anyway, he was interested in the journal I represented, and we talked a good deal about things in general. Subsequently, as we strolled up and down the deck enjoying a cigar, I took the liberty of soliciting his opinion about South African affairs, which were then very much to the fore. It is not my intention to record all that passed between us, but a prophecy of his I have never forgotten, and I have lived to see it verified. "In less than a quarter of a century," he said thoughtfully, "there will be a great war between this country and the Dutch population of South Africa that will tax the whole resources of the Empire." Then after a long pause, during which he seemed to have reflected deeply, he said thoughtfully, and rather as if speaking to himself: "Yes, African affairs will occupy the attention of the country for many years to come, and unless England is to lose

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her hold on Africa, the very highest qualities of statesmanship must be brought to bear."

Those words were uttered on the 12th of May 1876. How prophetic they were the world now knows, but the highest qualities of statesmanship are, unhappily, lacking. The statesmanship that plunged us into war with the American farmers, the statesmanship that has flouted Canada and wounded the pride of Australia, seems to be drifting us into an embroglio with regard to Africa for which this country will have to pay a very heavy penalty in the long run. It is the opinion of everyone who knows Africa, and the conviction of those who reside in the country, and surely they are entitled to a hearing.

To return to my story. The previous evening, about nine o'clock, the Princess of Wales and the Royal family had arrived, being accompanied by the Duke of Sutherland, General Knollys, Colonel Teesdale, and suite. They were accommodated for the night on board the *Enchantress*, which steamed away from the wharf a little in advance of us. When we reached the Needles the big ship with her white hull was seen slowly advancing. Presently she stopped, and the *Enchantress* went alongside; her distinguished passengers were transhipped, and we on the *Fire Queen* saw through our glasses the Royal wife hurry up to the Prince on the quarter-deck, and embrace him with every manifestation of unbounded delight and affection; then the children, forgetting their Royal dignity for the moment, followed their mother's example. It was a human and touching

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scene. Subsequently when I was describing it to a dear old lady, a relative of mine, she exclaimed :

“La! how like common folk!”

When the *Enchantress* had cleared away a signal was hoisted for us to go alongside. A strong wind was blowing, and the sea was very choppy. The *Fire Queen* was as a minnow compared with a triton as she got into the lee of the great ship. When we were near enough a gangway was hastily passed from the yacht to the lower ladder of the *Serapis*. A row of sailors lined each side of the gangway, and the ladies and gentlemen hurried across. When the last of them had gone Archibald Forbes followed, and I was in his wake. We were confronted by the urbane and courteous General Probyn, who inquired if we had tickets of invitation. The answer, of course, was in the negative. “Then I regret, gentlemen,” said the General, “I cannot admit you. My orders are very stringent.”

“But I am Archibald Forbes of *The Daily News*,” exclaimed my colleague excitedly, “and I was with the Prince in India.”

“Nevertheless, I cannot disobey my orders,” remarked the General, with a pleasant smile.

Forbes was furious, but I, being a humbler light, felt amused, and enjoyed the humour of the situation. As the little vessel was dancing about, and could only be kept in position with the greatest difficulty, her Captain sang out :

“Now, gentlemen, if you please, if you are coming back, come quickly.”

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Back we had to go, and orders were given for the yacht to follow up in the wake of the *Serapis*. The *Fire Queen* was hardly big enough to hold Forbes as we steamed towards Portsmouth Harbour. My host, the Captain, had promised me that he would lower a boat as soon as we got into the harbour, and put us on shore as sharp as he could, so that we should be in time to see the landing, and witness the ceremony of reception by the Mayor, Mr Pink, and the members of the Corporation. But man proposes, and God disposes! When the harbour was reached, and the huge *Serapis* was describing a circle so as to come broadside on to the wharf, we, in trying to get out of her way, ran foul of the Jacob's boom of the old Duke of Wellington with disastrous effects to ourselves. Our fore topmast was snapped short off, and came down with a run. Instantly all hands were piped to clear away the wreck, and the lowering of a boat for us was out of the question. Forbes danced, and gave vent to his feelings in unprintable language. A man-of-war's gig in charge of a middy was within hail. He was asked if he would put us on shore. He replied that it was more than his commission was worth. A fisherman was prowling by on the lookout for flotsam. To him I appealed.

"I shall want a couple of quid, guv'nor," he replied.

"Right," I replied, for moments were precious.

Forbes and I jumped in, and we were rowed to the wharf. All along the edge of the wharf was a line of policemen. "Go away, go away," someone in authority shouted. Our boatman, however, pulled

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more vigorously. A rope ladder was hanging down. I sprang on to it. A stalwart bobby tried to push me back into the boat. "Do you want to be tried and hung for murder?" I asked. "Let me come up, and I'll show you my Press ticket." Whereupon he grabbed me by the collar, and jerked me on to the wharf as a fisherman jerks a catch. My shirt collar was torn from its fastenings, my waistcoat ripped up, and a peaked cap I was wearing fell into the water. My appearance may be imagined. The first Pressman I caught sight of was Charles Williams. With eyes agog, he exclaimed:

"Where—on—earth—have you come—from?"

"*Serapis*," I answered shortly.

"You——"

The rest of the sentence was drowned in a mighty cheer as the Prince and Princess showed themselves over the bulwarks of the big ship, which was then being moored. As soon as the landing and reception were over I raced for the telegraph office, and put my copy on the wires.

A few days later the incident I have here dealt with was the subject of comment in *The Aberdeen Free Press*. Who was responsible for giving it publicity I know not, but in the issue of *The London Scottish Journal* for 20th May 1876 the following paragraph appeared. I believe it was written by the editor.

THE PRINCE AND THE PRESS

The London correspondent of *The Aberdeen Free Press* is cruelly kind in taking the part of

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two newspaper "specials," as the following will prove :—

"After all, the Prince need not have been so hard on the Press. What would the United Kingdom have known, what would it have cared, about the splendid receptions of the Prince in India and elsewhere had it not been for the publicity given to the proceedings by the Press?"

But to my tale of hardship. "Two enterprising special correspondents—Mr Archibald Forbes of *The Daily News* and Mr J. E. Muddock of *The Hour*—deemed it right in the due performance of their professional duties to go and meet the Prince of Wales. On the morning of Thursday last, like most other Pressmen, they went about the preliminaries quietly and separately, and, much to their mutual surprise, they met on board the *Fire Queen* at Portsmouth, where there were lords, dukes, and admirals, who had been invited to meet the Prince on board the *Serapis*. Thus far all was well, and one can easily fancy that, at the splendid breakfast provided in the saloon as the vessel steamed through the Solent, the Press gentlemen were as much gentlemen as any of the lords, dukes, and admirals on board. But there had been an eye that marked their coming, and it looked darker when the two specials got to the main-deck of the *Serapis*. 'The orders are strict,' said Major-General Probyn: 'everyone coming on board must have an invitation from the Prince,' and the two specials were under the painful necessity of leaving the fashionably crowded deck of the *Serapis*, retracing

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their steps down the long gangway, and ignobly re-boarding the *Fire Queen*. And this was not the worst of their dilemma. At Portsmouth the *Fire Queen* ran into the *Duke of Wellington*, and our two friends were under the necessity of hiring a boat to get on shore ; and when they did get into dock, they had a tough fight with the police before they were permitted to land. Such are the ups and downs of Press life. Someone will be inclined to say : ' Serve the Press right.' Yet under the circumstance there might, I fancy, have been a little more consideration shown for men who do so much and do it so well.

"It is the old story—diamond cut diamond. In Edinburgh a dozen years ago so strong was the rivalry amongst newspapers there—the *Scotsman*, *Courant*, *Mercury*, and *Review*—that at a common railway board meeting at Aberdeen four Edinburgh reporters would turn up, all of them having come at different times, and some of them by different routes, while each of them appeared utterly astounded at the presence of the others.

"Doubtless each of the two enterprising Pressmen referred to above believed that nobody but himself could possibly be so clever as to get on board the *Fire Queen*, and doubtless each spoiled the other's game. Still we think, with the *Free Press* correspondent, that when the specials did get on to the main-deck of the *Serapis* they might have been tolerated with a quiet 'you mustn't-do-this-again' caution."

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In closing this chapter I may add that I remained with *The Hour* until it suddenly ceased to exist. As many misstatements have been published as to the causes which led to its stoppage, I hope I am not betraying any secrets if at this time of day I venture to give the true reason, without mentioning names. A very large sum had been spent in organising and establishing the paper, and one of the founders had furnished no inconsiderable portion of the sum. Then there came a time when there was a financial crisis, but it was tided over, and ultimately a very well known and very wealthy gentleman agreed to find money to any extent subject to certain conditions being strictly observed. This gentleman, who was a man of high social position and unblemished honour, loyally carried out his part of the bargain until the founder alluded to above, ceased to respect the conditions imposed. The result was friction and unpleasantness of a very pronounced kind, and at last, when there seemed no hope of reconciliation, the supplies were cut off, and the poor *Hour* ceased to exist, when there was every prospect of it becoming a pronounced success. The offices in Salisbury Square were abandoned, and temporary offices taken in the city, where the accounts were audited, and the gentleman I have mentioned ultimately paid every debt.

Once again I found myself a free-lance. I made a tour on the Continent, and visited Portugal. I returned to London, edited a boy's paper published by Mr Cate the printer for a short period, and then

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journeyed to Scotland to help my friend, Charles Farquharson Finlay, to organise the almost moribund *Greenock Advertiser*. But before dealing with my Scottish experiences it is necessary that I should hark back a little in point of time.

CHAPTER V

The late Queen accepts a copy of my book—Recollections of T. P. O'Connor—Myself and Sala go to Chislehurst to the lying-in-state of the ex-emperor of the French—Amusing experience—A Sala supper—I visit the Savage Club for the first time—Make the acquaintance of Andrew Halliday, Henry J. Byron, Henry Lee, and others—The story of the founding of the renowned Club—Sudden death at the Club of George Grossmith—The Club entertains the Prince of Wales, who is elected a member—Pathetic end of Henry S. Leigh.

I HAVE already mentioned that I had published a book through Tinsley Brothers, and another through Samuel Tinsley; while a third, called “A Wingless Angel,” dedicated to my friend, Dr Benjamin Ward Richardson, and in part suggested by him, was published by Virtue & Co. I have a particular reason for mentioning this book, as it has a curious and funny history, which I shall presently deal with at some length, merely stating now that her Majesty Queen Victoria was pleased to accept a copy, and I was honoured by receipt of the following letter :—

Buckingham Palace, August 5th, 1878.

SIR,—Sir T. M. Biddulph is desired to acknowledge a book called “A Wingless Angel,” which the Queen has been pleased to accept from Mr Muddock.

Among my many acquaintances of those far-off days

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was Mr T. P. O'Connor, at that time an impecunious journalist. We used frequently to rub shoulders, and occasionally to toast each other in a certain house, beloved of Pressmen, not a hundred miles from Old Temple Bar. He had written a "Life of Lord Beaconsfield" with a pen dipped in gall. But if I remember rightly, it failed to bring him much remuneration. One day as I was passing along the Old Bailey he was coming out of his publisher's offices looking very glum and down in the mouth. Inquiring the cause of his depression, I learnt that he had been trying to get another little cheque on account, but had signally failed. Certainly life was not very rosy with him at that time. "I'm not going to remain like this. I'll do something," he exclaimed savagely. There was a stress of emphasis on that "I'll do something" which imparted a significance to it. My own impression of him at that time was that he was an Irish patriot, a dreamer of dreams, an idealist, clever but erratic, with not too much love for his adopted country. Certainly his Irish dislike of the Saxon was more than a little pronounced. But he was down on his luck, and much embittered; and his political bias often displayed itself with a warmth of expression, that with riper experience, he has learnt to subdue. We came at last to the parting of the ways; our paths ran in different directions, and I have not met him for many years; but I have watched his rise with much interest, and confess that he has falsified the opinion I formed of him as a youngster in the early seventies. I certainly did not regard him then as a

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coming man. Although I am not in accord with him politically, I greatly admire the energy and conspicuous abilities that have placed him in such a foremost position at the present day.

One of the most brilliant of the Fleet Street Bohemians it was my privilege to know was the late George Augustus Sala—and he *was* a Bohemian : an intellectual giant with all the waywardness of genius, and not a few weaknesses which begot him enemies, but withal he was a lovable man. One could forgive much for the sake of his cleverness. His money-earning powers were astonishing, and yet he seemed to have no more knowledge of the value of money than a sucking babe. He had led an adventurous and romantic life, and was one of the most entertaining raconteurs I have ever known. He has been the victim of many detractors ; envy, jealousy, and malice have prompted stories about him which have no foundation except in the shallow imaginations of the tellers. Conscious as he was of his power, he would not play second fiddle to any man, and was exceedingly intolerant of mediocrities. His faults were the faults that are almost always associated with a temperament such as he possessed, and so were his virtues. Not the least of these were staunchness and generosity to those he liked. He was a bad enemy, but a good friend, and many and many an act of kindness on his part has gone unrecorded, while some of his sins have been blazoned trumpet-tongued over the world. However, my object here is to relate two little characteristic stories, in each of which I played a part.

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When the once Emperor of France, Napoleon III., was lying in state at Chislehurst, Sala and I journeyed down there together. I went for my own paper, he for *The Daily Telegraph*. We had dallied on the way, and did not reach Camden House until very late. It was in January 1873. The doors were then closed, and orders had been issued that there were to be no further admissions that day. Double rows of policemen were drawn up in front of the house, and in addition there was, I think, a French guard of honour. Not even G. A. S. was powerful enough to break through that cordon ; but he resolved to get in, so by a stratagem we made our way to the rear of the place, and into a stable-yard where an ostler was grooming a horse. After some little negotiation this man was induced to indicate a way of entry. It lay over a wall and into a garden, thence through a conservatory. The friendly ostler provided a stool from the stable to further assist us. By this means we were able to reach the top of the wall at a part where the branches of a tree overhung. Thence we scrambled down, made our way to the conservatory, brazened it out with two Frenchmen who would have barred our passage, and gained a room where a number of official people were partaking of refreshments. Uninvited, we joined them, with an air of such superiority and authority that our right to be there was not even challenged then. In a little while I slipped away alone, and succeeded in reaching the *Chapelle Ardente*, where the body was lying amidst flowers and candles, with solemn soldiers standing mute like statues. On returning to the

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refreshment place, I found my friend in somewhat heated argument with a French gentleman.

"Come," he said, on seeing me, "we are evidently not appreciated here; let us go." And he stalked majestically down the long corridor, I following, to the main entrance, where the guards threw open the doors for us, and bowed us out, presumably under the impression that we were high in authority. But our little adventure did not end there. When we reached the station there was an enormous crowd, but an official who knew Sala passed us on to the platform, where "a special" was drawn up ready to convey a number of notabilities back to town. Another official, thinking that as we had been allowed on the platform we were of the party, hurried us into a first-class apartment, where there happened to be two vacant seats—the only two, I believe, in the train—and so we travelled back to town in comfort. But as I heard afterwards, we had occupied the seats reserved for a member of the then Cabinet and his son, who was furious when he found he had been left behind.

My other story is of a little supper given by Sala on, I believe, his birthday; anyway, it was in early winter. The party consisted of eight, including himself. We supped at a house much frequented by Sala, where he was ever a welcome guest. Everything was excellent. There were delicacies in and out of season. The feast went off without a hitch until the dessert stage was reached. Sala was a lavish host, and could entertain with a princely hand. It was on the principle

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of "Enjoy yourselves, my friends, and hang the expense." But——

"The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley."

The arrival of the dessert led to a large order on the part of our host for a quantity of a celebrated vintage port, brandy, liqueurs, cigars. A multi-millionaire could not have ordered more lavishly. Then a mystery happened. The waiter returned, and whispered into the ear of the giver of the feast.

"Oh, that be hanged," exclaimed the giver irritably. "Send old Jones here."

Jones was the landlord, but that wasn't his name. Bowing and rubbing his hands, old Jones appeared. To him G. A. S. thundered out a protest against such scurvy treatment on the part of a mere hostel-keeper. Withholding supplies from such merry gentlemen and excellent Bohemians was little short of a crime. But mine host, though much embarrassed, with delicate courtesy, protested against the inordinate length to which the bill was reaching and the inordinate length of other bills as yet unsettled. He alluded sorrowfully, almost tearfully, to a promise made that a little cheque should be handed to him before the banquet began, but being a mere detail, the promise had remained unfulfilled. How could one give one's mind to such a trifle on such a festive night! Demand on the part of the host was met by stern refusal on the part of old Jones. Then the indignant George imperiously demanded that "Jimmy" should be ordered to attend his majesty immediately. Now Jimmy was

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a hanger-on, with gouty toes and a bulbous nose, who lived outside on the pavement year in and year out. His duties consisted in handing buckets of water to cab horses, running errands, and being at everyone's beck and call. Jimmy duly appeared. The hour was late, but he was instructed to hie him with all the speed a cab horse was capable of to a certain weekly paper office, and deliver a note, with which he was entrusted, to a certain person. In due time Jimmy reappeared, and made the alarming announcement that the office was closed. But Jimmy was sent off again in the cab to the certain person's house, which, unless I am mistaken, was either Hammersmith or Putney. What was written in the important document he bore I know not; but I do know that the poor certain person, who was enjoying his beauty sleep, was roused out of his bed, was induced by what was stated in that precious note to write a cheque, and Jimmy returned in time to enable old Jones' heart to be softened by means of that autographed slip of paper, so that before the closing hour had struck the port wine was served, and our host's triumph was complete.

Other times, other manners. That was in the good old Bohemian days. Now, as Mr Mantalini would say, we are too demmed respectable to do such a thing. The modern journalist quenches his thirst with lemonade and ginger beer. He smokes cigarettes, knows nothing of vintages, and repairs him to his virtuous couch before midnight—except on special occasions.

To most people of the present generation Sala is

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little more than a name, but for many years he was a powerful force in the world of journalism, and did work of a kind which in my opinion has rarely been equalled and never excelled. To say that it was brilliant is to give it no more than its due, and his range of subjects was little short of marvellous. He was not only a walking encyclopædia, but one of the most methodical men I have ever known, while his memory was, as Dominie Sampson would have said, "Prodigious!" If he failed to attain the height to which his genius should have carried him, it was due to certain defects of temperament. He respected no one's feelings when he was aroused; and often the vigour of his language gave offence, though none was intended. But when all is urged against him that can be urged, the fact remains that George Augustus Henry Sala was a leading light in his time, a man of great intellect, a delightful companion, and a good friend. To him I would apply the lines of Colton, and say :

"He that can enjoy the intimacy of the great, and on no occasion disgust them with familiarity or disgrace himself by servility, proves that he is as perfect a gentleman by nature as his companions are by rank."

Sala was as incapable of servility as he was of displaying vulgar familiarity with those who by accident of birth or fortune ranked above him. A proper consciousness of his own powers kept him from being either a truckler or fawner.

I offer these few brief remarks of a really remarkable man as the honest opinion of one who knew him, studied him, and liked him. It is a pity that his life

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has never been written, for few men have had a more varied and exciting career than fell to his lot. He was a brilliant linguist, and as a descriptive writer had no rival. He was in Paris during the Commune in 1870, and owing to some unguarded remark made in a public place he was arrested, and charged with being a Prussian spy. He was thrown into prison, subjected to the most horrible indignities, and would most certainly have been shot but for the vigorous action of our Ambassador, who rescued him in the nick of time. He was one of Charles Dickens' brilliant staff during the palmy days of *Household Words*. Subsequently he made a tour of the world, and while in Australia his first wife died. Some years later he married again, and founded a paper which, unfortunately, had a brief and chequered career. He died in 1895, after a long illness.

He was the author of many works ; amongst others "The Baddington Peerage," and "Twice Round the Clock," "Hogarth and His Times," and for a period of something like thirty years was a power and influence in *The Daily Telegraph* office.

I have elsewhere made passing reference to William Brunton, who was the cartoonist for *Fun* under Tom Hood's régime. He was an artist of considerable distinction and a man of marked personality—a genial, warm-hearted Bohemian, given to erratic courses, but a genuine and lovable fellow.

One afternoon or evening in January 1872 Brunton and I were together when he invited me to the *Savage Club*, of which I had heard something in the way of



WILLIAM BRUNTON.

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gossip. So we entered a building known as Gordon's Hotel, Covent Garden, mounted a flight of stairs in the darkness, and in a few moments I found myself in a long, dingy room, with windows looking out on to a courtyard. At one end of the room was a bar, in charge of a young lady, where refreshments of a miscellaneous character could be obtained. The walls were adorned with framed play-bills, drawings, and, I think, a few oil paintings. Through a thick haze of tobacco smoke I discerned several men, one or two of whom I knew by sight, and one I was intimate with—that was Tom Hood. Among the others were Henry Lee, the genial naturalist ; Charles Millward, Andrew Halliday, and Henry J. Byron. The two last-named gentlemen were stars of the first magnitude in the literary and dramatic world at that period. Halliday (whose full name was Halliday Duff) was the son of a clergyman, and an Aberdeen University man. He had been with Thackeray on *The Cornhill*, and on the staff of *All the Year Round* under Dickens ; besides which he had written many plays. Byron was the son of the British Consul at Port-au-Prince, Hayti, and was a native of Manchester. He had also edited *Fun* for a time. Charles Millward, who was distinguished both as a journalist and dramatist, was for a long time honorary treasurer of the Club. He was a singularly generous and big-hearted man ; and if any unfortunate member was unable to pay his subscription, Millward dipped his hand into his own pocket rather than the member should be struck off the list. After a delightful hour or

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two in this goodly company Brunton, Lee, and I accompanied Halliday to Drury Lane Theatre, where he had one of his pieces running. I look back to that night as a memorable one, as it was the beginning of my connection with the famous Club, of which I still have the privilege and honour of counting myself a member. I was proposed for election in February 1872. My proposer was E. P. Hingston, my seconder Andrew Halliday. I was one of a number of candidates who were dealt with by the Committee on the 9th of March 1872. Among those present were Andrew Halliday (the President), E. C. Barnes, E. P. Hingston, T. Hersee, Tom Archer, Charles Millward, John O'Connor, George Grossmith, sen., G. A. Flinders, Jonas Levy, H. B. Chatterton, and Edward Draper. I was described as an author and journalist, and though I understood I had been elected, it appears that the "Minute-Book" was marked "Election postponed." Why, I have never been able to determine, and it is a mystery to this day. I was a constant attendant at the Club, and my right of entry was never once challenged. About the end of 1878, although I had been using the Club for years, it was intimated to me that I must again be put up for election. This time my proposer was Henry Lee, the genial naturalist, my seconder Charles Vincent Boys, and among my supporters were Wallis Mackay; A. M. Denison; Joe Mackay, one-time editor of *Vanity Fair*; John Cross; Henri Van Laun; E. J. Goodman of the *Daily Telegraph*; P. S. Duff; Charles Millward; and John Sturgess, the well-known artist,

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and I was duly elected on 17th April 1879. As I have already stated, however, my connection began in 1872. My own impression is I was really elected some time in that year; but as the original Minute-Book was partially destroyed, the record of the election was lost.

As the Savage Club is known the wide world over, I propose to deal with it at some length. The Club, like many another famous coterie, had a humble and, I may say, almost accidental beginning.

In the "Preface" to a little volume bearing the title of "The Savage Club Papers," edited by Andrew Halliday, and issued by Tinsley Brothers in 1868, we are told by the editor that :

The Savage Club was founded ten years ago, to supply the want which Dr Samuel Johnson and his friends experienced when they founded the Literary Club. A little band of authors, journalists, and artists felt the need of a place of reunion, where, in their hours of leisure, they might gather together and enjoy each others' society, apart from the publicity of that which was known in Johnson's time as the "Coffee-House," and equally apart from the chilling splendour of a modern club.

When about a dozen of the original members were assembled in the place selected for their meetings, it became a question what the Club should be called. Everyone in the room suggested a title. One said the "Addison," another the "Johnson," a third the "Goldsmith," and so forth; and at last after we had run the whole gamut of famous literary names of the

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modern period, a modest member in the corner suggested the "Shakespeare."

This was too much for the gravity of one of the company (the late Robert Brough), whose keen sense of humour enabled him in the midst of our enthusiasm to perceive that we were bent on making ourselves ridiculous.

"Who are we," he said, "that we should take these great names in vain? Don't let us be pretentious. If we must have a name let it be a modest one—one that signifies as little as possible." Hereupon a member called out, in a pure spirit of wantonness, *The Savage*.

That keen sense of humour was again tickled. "The very thing!" he exclaimed. "No one can say there is anything pretentious in assuming *that* name. If we accept Richard Savage as our godfather, it shows there is no pride about us; if we mean that we are *sævi*, why then it will be a pleasant surprise for those who may join us to find the wigwam a *lucus a non lucendo*."

And so in a frolicsome humour our little society was christened the "Savage Club."

As Andrew Halliday was present at the meeting referred to, and was one of the founders of the Club, the above version of the naming may be taken as absolutely correct. But there are divided opinions as to whether the member who called out "The Savage" meant the reprobate Richard Savage, or to dub Brough a savage for objecting to the great names that had been mentioned. My own view is the latter one. However, that is a detail; one thing is certain, not

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one of that brilliant band of clever Bohemians could possibly have foreseen the fame that the Club was to acquire as the years rolled by.

That memorable meeting when the Club was christened took place at the Crown Tavern, Vinegar Yard, Drury Lane. And it was in the very same room that the first contributors to *Punch* used to meet and arrange their programme. The tavern was kept by a Mr Lawson, who was a *persona grata* among the literary and artistic Bohemians of the day, while his house had gained a reputation as a resort for wits and wags. Lawson himself was somewhat of a wit, and affected the company of men of intellect. It was under his roof that Augustus Mayhew, James Hannay, Watts Phillips, and a few others projected and started their comic broadsheet entitled *The Journal of Laughter*. It was not, however, backed up by any capital, and though a brilliant and able production, it came to grief.

When the bantling Savage Club located itself at the distinguished Crown Tavern, it was arranged that each member should pay an annual subscription of five shillings for the good of the house. But Lawson was so pleased with his guests that he subsequently waived this payment, and at his own expense he had a set of tumblers engraved with the name of the Club. The Club must have felt when they saw those tumblers that they were moving upward. Previous to that, pewter pots had been considered good enough. Among the original members were Robert, William, John, and Lionel Brough.

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Robert was the secretary, and Andrew Halliday the first and only president. Other members were G. A. Sala, W. B. Tegetmeier, John Hollingshead, Edward Draper, Frank Talfourd, Henry J. Byron, Robert Soutar, Horace St John, Charles and James Kenney, and Henry Angel.

A story is told that when the Club was located in Vinegar Yard Edmund Yates asked a member one day what the subscription to the Club was, and the member replied: "Just whatever the member likes to owe." This seems to have been the principle on which my membership was continued during the intervening years between 1872 and 1879. Another joke current at the time was that a member was seen to change a sovereign in the Club-house, and his brother members were so astonished that a Savage should be in possession of such wealth, that he was promptly and peremptorily told he must expend it to the uttermost farthing in providing the Club with liquid refreshment, or suffer scalping. As he had a regard for his scalp, he spent the sovereign like a true Savage.

In 1858 the Savages removed to the Nell Gwynne Tavern, another famed hostelry in its day, and there they had a large room, for which they paid a rental of £40 per annum.

And now the list of members was increased by the names of J. L. Toole, Benjamin Webster, George Honey, Edmund Falconer, George Belmore, John Billington, George Grossmith, sen., "Bill" Romer, and one or two lesser lights. The Club was gaining in members, but as it does not seem as if subscriptions

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were enforced, it was always in financial difficulties. It was in the Nell Gwynne Tavern during the Club's occupancy that Halliday and Bob Brough wrote the *Area Belle*, and one or two other farces that became famous at the Adelphi.

The next move of the Club was to the first floor of the premises which were at a later stage to be occupied by Cassell's *Echo*, in Wellington Street, Strand. It chanced, however, that a dancing master had rooms above, and proved such a nuisance to the Savages that they fled to the Lyceum Tavern, on the opposite side of the street. The list of members was again lengthened by the names of T. W. Robertson, E. A. Southern, the actor; Henry S. Leigh, the wit and poet; Arthur Sketchley, Tom Hood, "Jeff" Prowse, Jonas Levy, Frank Vizetelley, and others. The Club remained at the Lyceum from 1861 to 1863, and the famous Saturday night entertainments were inaugurated.

In 1862 the Savages entertained at a splendid banquet all the members of the foreign Press who were attending the great Exhibition of that year. This entertainment was in many respects unique. The assembly was a polyglot one, and each foreign guest was waited upon by a member of the Club who could speak the guest's language. The late Dr Strauss, who was not the least distinguished of the Savages, delighted the company by making a speech of welcome in English, French, German, and Italian. In the course of the sing-song that followed the feast Edward Askew Southern read "Brother Sam's Letter," and old George Cruikshank gave a side-

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splitting recitation, while the renowned Henry Russell made a sensation by singing the stirring song called "The Ship on Fire," which was afterwards a feature at the old Polytechnic Institution, and was sung to the accompaniment of magic-lantern views of a burning ship.

In the course of 1863 the Club, which even then was becoming celebrated, made another flit; this time to Gordon's Hotel in Covent Garden, where it located itself for three years. The Saturday night entertainments had now become a strong feature, and began to attract attention. Viscount Adair (now Earl of Dunraven) joined the magic circle of cultured Bohemians, as well as Joseph Hatton, Squire Bancroft, Kendal, and several distinguished Americans.

With true savage instincts, it seemed as if the Club could not settle long in one place, and so we find it making another move about the end of 1866, and it pitched its wigwam at "Ashley's" Hotel, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, and there they remained until some time in 1869, and they added to their constantly lengthening members' list such well-known names as Artemus Ward, C. H. Burnett (the distinguished *Punch* artist) Stephen Fiske, Clement Scott, John Brougham, Charles Lever, F. W. Topham, Gilbert and Arthur A'Beckett, Henry Irving, F. B. Chatterton (lessee of Drury Lane Theatre), Charles Wyndham, and John Hare.

While in this hostelry the first issue of the "Savage Club Papers" took place. The papers were edited by Andrew Halliday, and the first series was published in 1868; a second series in 1869. Tinsley Brothers

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were the publishers, and the object of the first issue was to assist the widow of a dead and gone Savage. It was characteristic of these lovable Bohemians, who if they lacked money, made up for the lack by brains, that they never turned a deaf ear to an appeal for help. Surely no body of intellectual men, calling themselves a club, have ever placed so many good deeds to their account as the clever Savages. The Club has gathered to its fold all that is best and brightest in Literature, Art, and Science, and let me add—the Drama, workers and toilers in their respective callings to whom wealth gave the cold shoulder. And yet of their talents and genius and money how freely have they given! How often have they dried the widow's tears and hushed the hunger-cry of the orphan! When a brother was overtaken by misfortune, and fell by the wayside, a hundred leapt to his rescue. We know that the widow's mite found favour with the Lord; and a thousand and one unrecorded acts of benevolence of the working Savages will surely be remembered in their favour when the Book of Deeds of Men on Earth is opened for final judgment. As in the past a cry of distress never passed unheeded, so to-day the Savages play the part of Good Samaritan, and ready as ever are they to cheer and comfort a fallen brother.

The time had come now for another move, and we find the Savages back at Gordon's, Covent Garden; but their stay on this occasion was very short, and they skipped into "Evan's," close by, where they settled down for another three years. Mark Twain,

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W. J. Florence, John M'Culloch, became Savages during this period. But now the Committee seemed to be seized with a mania for "pilling," and among the rejected ones were W. S. Gilbert, and many other well-known men distinguished in the world of Letters and Art. This blackballing went on for some time relentlessly, and apparently for no earthly reason beyond that of caprice. What the Club lacked at this period was business organisation. The Savages could write brilliant books, heart-moving poems, stirring dramas, draw, paint pictures, display almost startling phases of intellectuality, but they wanted the spirit of commercialism. But it was not to be expected of them ; indeed, it would have been contrary to the true principles of intellectual Bohemianism had they allowed the commercial instincts to predominate. And so in their own delightful, slipshod way they conducted the affairs of the Club ; and there were muddle and confusion often, occasionally almost chaos. Yet is it not remarkable that the Club has flourished through it all, and the highest in the land have deemed it an honour to partake of Savage hospitality, while this year of grace marks its Jubilee ? Fifty years have come and gone since the Club became a living force ; hundreds of Savages during that period have laid down the burden of life, but their memory is kept green in the hearts of the living members ; and to-day the Club is as a vigorous green bay-tree, and though it may be conducted on stricter business lines, its keynote is one of fraternal regard for all whose proud privilege it is to count themselves members.

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Although there is some mystery about my membership at the time I am dealing with, I had the run of the Club, as I have already stated. And now once again the Savages went on the trail, and on this occasion trekked to Haxell's in the Strand; and after a brief period there we next find them in the Caledonian Hotel on the Adelphi Terrace, and it was while the Club was at that hostelry that I was properly enrolled by being called upon to pay an entrance fee and subscription. There was one tragic incident in connection with the tenancy at the Caledonian which threw a deep gloom over the Savage Brotherhood. There was no more popular member than dear old George Grossmith, sen. He hadn't an enemy in the world, while his friends were numbered by scores. On the 24th of April 1880 he was presiding at the Saturday night House Dinner, there being an unusually large gathering of Savages, for George always drew a big house. He had just recited—and he *could* recite—a most amusing scene called “An incident in the Life of the late Serjeant Talfourd,” the Savages were still roaring with laughter, when Grossmith was suddenly seized with an attack of apoplexy. Instantly the laughter ceased, and there were consternation and heartfelt sorrow. The unconscious gentleman was removed to another room, and medical aid was at once forthcoming. His second son, Walter, was present at the time, and he instantly despatched a message for his elder brother George, who was playing in *The Pirates of Penzance* at the Opera Comique. But poor Grossmith never rallied, and died in the

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Club-house about three hours after the seizure. He was just sixty years of age. It is a curious fact that his friend, Serjeant Talfourd, about whom he was telling the funny story, had a few years previously, in precisely the same way, been seized with apoplexy on the bench. Another curious fact is that the last music Grossmith heard was Beethoven's Funeral March, played by his own special request on the piano. The pianist was the late Theodore Drew.

There is an amusing little story, in which I figure, relating to this period that I cannot resist telling. It was a bitter winter day, London was at its worst, gloom and grime everywhere. I went into the Club-room about three o'clock in the afternoon. A solitary member sat disconsolate over the fire. He looked up as I entered, and greeted me glumly. "Do you happen to have five shillings?" he inquired. It happened that I hadn't. "I'm sorry," he mumbled; "I should have liked to have drunk my own health." The landlord of the hotel, I may mention, was a commercial man. It was cash on delivery with him. Entered a third member. "Do you happen to have five shillings?" was asked. It was singular, but even that member didn't happen to have the insignificant sum. And the three of us huddled round the fire, and thirsted for scalps. Then there came unto us a fourth Savage; and he didn't happen to have it, but he had genius and a solitary shilling. Now, a shilling wasn't much amongst four, but, backed up by genius, it did wonders. It was John L. Toole's birthday, and the genial actor was playing an engage-

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ment in Dublin. So genius said: "Let us spend the shilling in wishing him many happy returns of the day by telegraph." And we did, and gave our four names. Then we watched the clock. The wretched old thing, in order to mock us, insisted in putting a hundred and twenty minutes into the hour. But presently an angel's voice was heard; no, it was only a telegraph boy. A telegram from Dublin. "Thanks, dear boys. Drink my health. Order in what you like. I'll square. Toole." Four Savages sat round the fire, on the hearth-rug a steaming bowl of excellent punch. Four glasses were raised, and "many happy returns" said. Other Savages came. More punch. More Savages, more punch. A fig for the gloom of London! That cosy room, those delightful Savages, the pipes of peace, the delicious aroma of the steaming punch as the full bowls replaced the empty ones! The world was very good and life a delightful dream! A fortnight later there was an awakening. Toole was back in town, and "Just dropped in, dear boys, don't you know." Then forth came he of the hostel with "Mr Toole's little account," half-a-yard long; whereupon there arose a yell, and J. L. T. panted for scalps—four scalps, the scalps of the four members who had consumed a hogshead of punch in wishing him "many happy returns." "Why, good gracious, they must have bathed in it, don't you know." But dear old Johnny settled the score, and told the "boys" to give their orders to the waiter, although it didn't happen to be anybody's birthday.

Dear, delightful Toole! Fate gave him many

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friends, but seared his kindly heart with domestic afflictions. Slowly he drifted to a better world, and we who linger yet a little longer keep his memory green, for he was a lovable man, and the good that he did lives after him.

From the Caledonian Hotel the Club betook itself to Lancaster House in the Savoy, and here for the first time the Savages had a Club-house more suited to their ever-increasing numbers, and they began to cater for themselves. The longest stay they had up to then ever made in one place was made there. Nine years! And what an eventful nine years they were! The Club had the great honour of entertaining H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, now His Majesty Edward VII. The Prince was duly enrolled a Savage, and remained so until he ascended the throne, when he graciously requested that his son, the present Prince of Wales, might be elected a member of the famous Club, which was now known all over the world. It was during the Savoy era that Mr H. M. Stanley, Mr W. E. Gladstone, M.P., Lord Wolseley, two Lord Mayors, and many other very distinguished people, were the Club's guests.

At last the time came when another move became necessary, and still clinging to the neighbourhood of their beloved Strand, the Savages took up their abode in the spacious and comfortable premises they now occupy on the Adelphi, where they are likely to remain for some years yet.

I have thus traced the wanderings of this unique Club from its inception down to the present day, when it numbers on its list —

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H.R.H. the PRINCE OF WALES, K.G., etc.

His Excellency WHITELAW REID.

Right Hon. EARL ROBERTS, V.C., K.G.

Right Hon. VISCOUNT KITCHENER, G.C.B.

Right Hon. LORD ALVERSTONE, G.C.M.G.

(Lord Chief Justice of England).

The Right Hon. and Right Rev. the LORD

BISHOP OF LONDON.

Dr FRIDTJOF NANSEN.

Capt. ROBERT F. SCOTT, R.N., C.V.O., D.Sc.

H.R.H. the DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

It is a far stretch back to those early days in Vinegar Yard, when the small band of clever and happy-go-lucky Bohemians decided to call their then little coterie the Savage Club.

Now it goes without saying that among a body of men representing Literature, the Arts, and Sciences, and the Drama, banded together for mutual intercourse, there should be a very pronounced fraternal spirit, and in this respect I boldly assert that the Club stands alone ; while its readiness at all times to help in any good cause has given it a world-wide reputation for benevolence and charity.

In the issue of *The Illustrated London News* for 4th February 1860 appeared the following paragraph :—

There is a little Club in London which deserves to be known. It flourishes almost without subscriptions, but lives on wit and wine, on fun and Barclay &

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Perkins. It is called the *Savage*, not from the Savage made immortal by Johnson. It is not a little Garrick, but it includes within its walls many men well known in Letters and Art.

This "Little Club" which lived on wit and wine, and deserved to be known, promptly became known, for a month after the above paragraph appeared—that is to say, on 7th March 1860—it gave an amateur performance at the Lyceum Theatre for the benefit of the widows and families of two of their confreres who had recently died. The pieces selected were *The School for Scandal*, in which the talented actress Miss Amy Sedgwick appeared, and a new burlesque of *The Forty Thieves*. This performance was honoured by the presence of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria ; her consort, Prince Albert, and a brilliant suite ; while the house was packed from floor to ceiling, until there wasn't an inch of room to spare. It may almost safely be said that never before, in this country at least, had an amateur performance been honoured in such a marked way. Moreover, "The Little Club" proved that the fame which had so suddenly come to it was well deserved, for the performance was admirable in every sense of the word.

The principal characters in the comedy were sustained by F. Talfourd, William Brough, Robert B. Brough, Crawford Wilson, Henry J. Byron, Andrew Halliday, and Edward Draper. The burlesque, which was a screamingly funny thing, was the joint production of several authors, including J. R. Planché,

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Francis Talfourd, Henry J. Byron, Leicester Buckingham (son of the famous James Silk Buckingham), Andrew Halliday, Edward Draper, and the Broughs. The Royal party, it is said, were convulsed with laughter, and the Queen expressed the pleasure her visit to the theatre had afforded her. The performance was a huge success, and the next morning "The Little Club" woke up to find itself famous. Probably on such a memorable occasion it did not go to bed at all that night. There was hardly a paper in the whole of Great Britain that hadn't a lengthy notice of the event; and then the chronicle went rolling round the world, until it was known in the remotest corner of the mighty British Empire. On 26th June of the same notable year the Club was saddened by the death of poor, clever Robert Brough, who died at Manchester. He had been in indifferent health for some time, and was on his way to Wales, hoping to recuperate in the Welsh mountain air. He had distinguished himself as a journalist, dramatist, poet, and had gained considerable fame for his version of the songs of Béranger. Dear old, kindly Bohemian, how ready he had always been to help others, and now that he had gone down into the dust up sprang "The Little Club" to aid "Bob's" family. And on 25th July 1860 it gave a performance at Drury Lane Theatre. Among the Committee on that occasion were Edmund Yates, T. German Reed, George Cruikshank, Henry Mayhew, Herbert Ingram, M.P., Dante Rossetti, E. L. Blanchard, J. Stirling Coyne, Tom Taylor, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins,

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G. A. Sala, Mark Lemon, Shirley Brooks. Ye gods! what a list of names! Every man is dead, yet even at the present day each name is one to conjure with. Sala wrote a stirring address, which he himself delivered with telling effect, for he was a brilliant elocutionist. The performance was a great success, and realised a large sum of money. In 1862 the reader need not be told that there was famine sore in the Lancashire land. The Civil War then raging in America had stopped the supplies of cotton, and thousands of operatives throughout Lancashire were suffering hunger and poverty, while grim death stalked through their midst. Then up rose the Savages again. They had previously given a performance in Liverpool in 1860, and on 3rd September 1862 they journeyed down to the great shipping town to play at the Theatre Royal for the "Relief of the unemployed Operatives." The pieces played were *A Romantic Idea*, written by Planché, and an original burlesque entitled *Valentine & Orson*, in which most of the distinguished amateurs of the Club took part. Shirley Brooks wrote an address that was delivered by Mrs Stirling. Needless to say, the performance was a pronounced success, and a large sum was handed over to the "Famine Fund."

On 14th June 1862, the year of the Exhibition, there were many foreign representatives of the Press in London, and these gentlemen were splendidly entertained by the Savages, and were loud in their praises not only of the generous hospitality extended to them, but of the wit and talent displayed by the

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respective members of "The Little Club." It is, I think, worth while to refer here to an incident which at the time caused a good deal of friction. In 1867 a so-called comic paper appeared under the title of *The Tomahawk*, which seemed to imagine that abuse and vulgarity would pass for wit. The weekly paper known as *The Court Journal*, with profound stupidity, jumped at once to the conclusion that *The Tomahawk* was the production of the *Savage Club*, and the dull and ponderous *Court Journal* proceeded to abuse the Club in the most scurrilous and vulgar manner. The then president of the Savages, Andrew Halliday, lost no time in disclaiming, on behalf of the Club, any connection direct or indirect with the publication named, and compelled the flippant critic to make a most abject apology to the members of the Club for the way he had insulted them. The article complained about was slanderous and impudent in the extreme, and the wonder is that the editor of a paper claiming to be respectable should have allowed such an article to have appeared without first assuring himself that it was justified. But *The Court Journal* has never been distinguished for ability of any kind, despite its somewhat pretentious title.

I have elsewhere referred to Artemus Ward's death. He passed away at Radley's Hotel, Southampton. It was on 6th March of 1867. He had long been in critical health, and was on his way to America, which he hoped to reach before the inevitable end came. But it was not to be. Many of his old friends in the *Savage Club* went down to see him, and do

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what they could to cheer him in his last hours. I myself was not a member of the Club at that time. His body was brought back to London, and laid to rest in Kensal Green Cemetery. It is not a little curious that Artemus Ward's death was very nearly the cause of totally wrecking the Savage Club; for a dispute arose, and led to a newspaper controversy as to whether or not Browne had died in the Roman Catholic or Protestant faith. The Club was almost rent asunder, and for a time there was bitterness. It is remarkable that a number of clever Bohemians like the Savages should have fallen to wrangling at such a time and about such a matter. It was by no means an edifying spectacle. However, it did not last long, fortunately, and probably would not have occurred at all, had the following paragraph not appeared in *The Tablet* :—

Mr Charles Browne died at Radley's Hotel, Southampton, on Ash Wednesday (March 1867). The Rev. Robert Mount, the Catholic priest at Southampton, was with him three times during his last hours; and on the information which he received, did, under the circumstances, what he was justified in doing for the spiritual safety of the dying man.

In reply to this a member of the Savage Club, and one of Ward's earliest English friends (E. P. Hingston), addressed the following letter to the editor of *The Tablet*, in which paper it appeared, as well as in *The Porcupine*, on 23rd March 1867 :—

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SIR,—As your brief obituary notice of the late lamented Artemus Ward *almost* implies that my late friend was a Roman Catholic, will you kindly permit me to state that Charles Farrar Browne lived and died in the *Protestant* faith? It is quite true that a Roman Catholic clergyman called upon him during the early stages of his last illness, and kindly tendered his spiritual offices, but those offices were respectfully and firmly declined. The same reverend gentleman also visited my poor friend on Sunday, the 3rd instant; but Mr Browne was then unconscious, and from that hour to the moment of his death, existence to him was a blank, and he expired peacefully and painlessly in the presence of friends whom he loved to know, but whom he failed to recognise during the last sad days of his life. Mr Browne had previously and repeatedly assured me that he was *not* a Roman Catholic, and hence it was that his sorrowing friends interred his body at Kensal Green in strict accordance with the faith he always professed. The same friends would have followed his dust with equal reverence to a Roman Catholic burial if their much lamented companion had been a follower of that faith; but Mr Browne lived and died a Protestant, and as a Protestant he was buried. In conclusion, permit me to quote from a letter I have just received from an old play-mate and school-fellow of poor Artemus: "In regard to the stories in circulation that Artemus was born and bred under the Roman Catholic faith, I can say, and knowingly, that such was not the case. I never heard of a Roman Catholic in the American

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town of Waterford. There are three churches there, viz. Congregationalist, Methodist, and Universalist. All of Artemus' family belonged and attended the Congregationalist—the same that my own family attended. Artemus and myself were in the same Sabbath school, so do not think, if Artemus or his mother could have been asked, but their wish would have been just what you have carried out."

I should not have touched on the subject here, but I feel that the history of the Club would hardly be complete without a reference to it. A more interesting theme is the following amusing account of the first meeting between Henry J. Byron and Artemus Ward at the Savage Club.

Mr Howard Paul is responsible for the following particulars of a little passage of arms between the humorists, at that time two of the leading wits of the Club. The particulars as given are undoubtedly correct. It was after one of the Saturday dinners that Tom Robertson urged Artemus to have a tilt with Byron, and if possible, draw him out. The gentle Artemus had only been in England a few days, and was therefore, in a sense, a stranger; but he knew Byron well by reputation, and, of course, Artemus himself was a lion; so pulling his long moustache, as was his wont, he remarked in his inimitable drawl to Byron, who sat opposite him:

"I say, I fancy I've seen a face like yours before. Did you ever have a brother named Alonzo?"

For a moment or two the dramatist was rather

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taken aback ; but he was too keen to be long at a disadvantage, and grasping the situation, replied, with a mournful expression of face :

“ Alas, alas ! I had, poor dear—my only brother.”

“ He was a mariner, engaged on the deep, if I mistake not ? ”

“ That’s so. Why, you seem to have my family history at your finger-ends.”

“ Ah ! Now it’s within my knowledge that you haven’t heard from him for five years ? ”

Byron affected to be lost in meditation, and presently replied slowly :

“ It’s five years ago this very day. What a remarkable coincidence that you should have mentioned it ! It’s wonderful—really wonderful ! ”

“ Well—sir,” replied Artemus, whipping out his handkerchief, and brushing away an imaginary tear—
“ I sailed the salt seas—the salt seas, mark you—with your beloved brother. We were wrecked together in the Gulf of Mexico ; yes, it was the Gulf of Mexico, as I remember well. I have a good memory. I loved him. Now, sir, circumstances arose, that I need not enter upon, which rendered it necessary for me to eat your dear brother. The moment I saw you I recognised the family likeness. He was an excellent fellow, full of tender——”

“ I’m glad you found him tender ; his family didn’t.”
And Byron whipped out *his* handkerchief, and swept away a lot of imaginary tears.

“ But, sir,” pursued Artemus in the most imperturbable way, “ I’m really sorry I ate him. Had I thought

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for a moment that I should subsequently meet his brother, I'm sure I would have gone without food for several weeks longer; for we were good chums, and as I say, I loved him. But, you see, I was driven to it. You'll forgive me, won't you? I really adored Alonzo. I found him extremely good." He put out his hand, which Byron grasped with great cordiality.

"Excuse my emotion," whimpered Byron in broken tones. "He never wrote and told me what he was doing or where he was going to. He was a rum chap——"

"Yes; he was strongly impregnated with it; it was in his blood."

"I hope, Mr Ward, that poor Alonzo agreed with you?"

"Well, I had a slight indigestion afterwards. In parts he was tough. He was a mariner, you see, and was a bit salt, apart from his rum flavour. But we will not speak of that. We both suffered—he suffered most; but I really despatched him as lovingly as I could. It was stern necessity, you know. We seafaring men are often driven to it. The law, of course, can't touch me now. Necessity, as you are aware, knows no law. But I'm quite willing to compensate you for the loss you have suffered."

"Pray, don't mention it—don't mention it. He supported you, or you would not now be telling me this mournful story. I think therefore——"

"Now what do you think, Mr Byron, would be fair compensation?"

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Byron looked up, and there was an inquiring look in his eyes.

"Let me see," he remarked drily; "I think your name is Ward—Artemus Ward?"

"That is so my friend. There is only one of us."

"And you are the humorist? You've written a book? You've run a show? You've told funny stories?"

"How true, how true! You are evidently well informed. I certainly have perpetrated all those crimes."

"You had a father?"

"I have always been given to understand that such was the case. My dear mother told me so, and she was a truthful woman."

"Your father, if I don't err, was a Yankee pedlar in his own country. Is that true?"

"It's gospel truth. Now, it's real strange you should know that, Mr Byron."

"He peddled bug pizen and fine tooth combs?"

"You've hit the comb—I mean the nail—on the head. His calling is now a matter of history."

"He died in the Black Country of England?"

"Truth again. He also lived there, or he couldn't have died there."

"Well, I killed him. I knew you were his son the moment I set eyes on you. He was a very nice old gentleman. I first made his acquaintance in Staffordshire, and I loved him. He was most anxious to go down a deep coal mine, so was I. We went down together, and had an elegant time. We explored, lunched with the miners, drank more than was good

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for us, then began to return to the upper earth—Mother Earth. After you've been down a mine you feel fond of your mother, I can tell you. The prodigal son felt nothing compared with what I experienced at that moment. As we were being drawn up from the bowels I saw that the old rope was giving way under the strain, for your dear father was a heavy man. It was a perilous, a critical, a horrible moment. I was always good, very good. I used to go to Sunday school; but I was not prepared to die then, and I eyed your respected parent fiercely. He had no business to be so bulky. Self-preservation is, as you are aware, the first law of nature. It's a wonderful law. In another instant we should both have been lost. I was good, very good; your father—well, I knew nothing against his moral character, but he was a great weight, you see. He had done himself too well in his time. He preyed on my mind as I looked at him, he was so bulky. We were then about fifty feet from the top. I called your dear father's attention to something. I induced him to gaze below into the awful black depths; he did so, when I gently tipped him over, and he went whirling and crashing to the bottom. He was a very fat man, you'll remember. Bulky men fall heavily. It was rough on him, of course, and I understand he did some damage to the mine, but I saved myself. I ciphered it out on the instant like this: He is an old man, he is bald, deaf in his right ear, two of his teeth gone in front, and anyway he couldn't last for more than another score of years, even if he gave up drink and good living.

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I am half his age, strong and healthy, the father of a young family, with a career before me, a comedy to finish for the Haymarket, and a burlesque accepted for the Strand. Now, I ask you, sir, if, under the distressing circumstances, I did not behave nobly?"

"Nobly, nobly; indeed you did, my friend," sobbed Ward. "I would have done the same thing myself to your father."

"I am glad," replied Byron, "to find you so intelligent. You do credit to your country, sir—the country of the Stars and Stripes and the Almighty Dollar. You ate my brother, and found him tough; and I killed your dear old father. He was a fine man, and I loved him, but the case was urgent. I was forced into it. However, we are both avenged. Let us draw a veil over the sad past, and during your stay here never allude again to these heartrending incidents; they tend to disturb one's equanimity."

"Agreed, agreed," cried Ward cheerfully. "Shake, my friend." And Artemus extended his hand, and with the other dramatically dashed away a flood of imaginary tears. "Now what's your pizen? Here, waiter, take the orders."

A crowd had collected round the two wits; there were roars of laughter; the friendship was cemented, and ever after Artemus and Byron were devoted to each other. Byron followed him to the grave, and survived him only fifteen years.

On the 13th of March 1870 the Club lost another of its founders and most distinguished members in the person of William Brough, whose death caused

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sincere and widespread sorrow. He was a brilliant dramatist, and his burlesques and extravaganzas have never been equalled. In all his writings he was bright, sparkling, witty, with never a suggestion of coarseness. He was only forty-four when he died, yet he had been before the public for twenty-two years.

Less than twelve months later poor Tom W. Robertson went over to the majority after a long illness. He died on the 4th of February 1871, in what should have been the prime of his manhood. He had been staying at Torquay in search of health, but returned to his home in Eton Road, Haverstock Hill, knowing that his days were numbered, and there he gradually faded out.

Robertson was born in Newark-on-Trent on the 9th of January 1829, his parents being members of the theatrical profession. Educated partly in England and partly in Holland, he produced his first piece when he was about twenty-two. It was called *A Night's Adventure; or Highways and Byways*, and was played at the Olympic under William Farren's management. It was not a success, however, and his name did not come prominently before the public, until his clever adaptation of *David Garrick*, with Southern in the title rôle, was produced at the Haymarket in 1864. From that moment he never looked back, and his brilliant and strikingly original comedies under the Marie Wilton régime at the little Prince of Wales' Theatre, out of the Tottenham Court Road, brought him undying fame. Apart

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from his abilities as a dramatist, he was distinguished as a journalist and essayist. It is recorded that when he knew his end was near he exclaimed pathetically to a friend: "Oh, if I had only known fame was coming to me, wouldn't I have taken pills." He left a family of three children. His son Tom became a member of the Savage Club, and died in May 1895.

On 31st August 1872 Henry M. Stanley, even then famed as the correspondent of *The New York Herald*, was entertained by the Club at the Gordon Hotel, Covent Garden. He had recently returned from his great journey into the heart of Africa in search of Livingstone, and with what success the world now knows. For some unaccountable reason he had been bitterly, even brutally assailed by a certain section of the English Press, and denounced as an impostor. This attack upon him was as unjustifiable as it was cruel, and reflected most discreditably on the journals that lent themselves to it. In responding to the toast of his health at the Club he made a most powerful speech, and was led into scathing remarks apropos to the doubts that had been thrown on his veracity by disreputable journals. When he came to speak of Livingstone he quite broke down, and had to pause for some moments until he could recover himself; then in tremulous voice he described his meeting with the famous missionary and explorer at Ujiji.

After the dinner the company adjourned to the Vaudeville Theatre, and a sketch was made of Stanley as he sat in his box by a member of the Club. From

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that sketch, which I am able to reproduce here, it will be seen that he was a most striking-looking man.

At a later period I came to see much of him, and I was one of the first to welcome him when he returned to England after his discovery of the Congo. He was certainly one of the most remarkable men it has ever been my privilege to know ; a man with a great intellect, a tender heart, and apparently a cast-iron frame. But suffering and hardships broke him down. One day, after he became a Member of Parliament, I sat with him in the smoking-room of the House of Commons, and on his refusing to partake of some whisky and water I asked him if he didn't think a little stimulant might be of benefit to him. He looked at me, and with a sad smile on his pallid face, said :

“ My dear Muddock, stimulant would kill me dead. Weak tea is the only thing I can take, and that poisons me. I knew before I came home Africa had sealed my doom. Kismet ! ”

Stanley, like everyone else who becomes a conspicuous figure in the world, was the victim of a great deal of spiteful criticism. Envy, jealousy, and hatred will never be eliminated from human nature, and there is no doubt there were those who envied him his success. I remember hearing a Member of Parliament who had travelled extensively, but had never done anything, say : “ I don't know what they are making all this fuss about Stanley for. After all, what has he accomplished that any other determined man couldn't have done ? ” Well I, who know something of the conditions under which he had to travel, declare



L.S.
Aug. 31. 1872

PENCIL SKETCH OF H. M. STANLEY,
AS HE 'SAT IN A BOX AT THE
VAUDEVILLE THEATRE, AFTER
BEING ENTERTAINED BY THE
CLUB.



A. Bronson

PEN AND INK SKETCH OF ARTEMUS WARD.
By A. BRONSON.

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fearlessly that his journeys into the Dark Continent were little short of marvellous, and revealed him as one of the most remarkable men the last century produced. To accuse him, as he was accused, of simply seeking self-glorification, was ridiculous. Such a temperament and disposition as he possessed would have enabled him to gain plenty of glory without taking risks, if glory had been the only thing that actuated him. But with his life in his hands he went forth into the darkness, braving death in a thousand forms ; suffering disease, discomfort, hunger, and thirst, not merely for the sake of glory, but because he felt he had a mission to accomplish, and he resolved to accomplish it at all hazards. It was said that he had faults of temper ; that his organisations were bad ; that he sacrificed men where such sacrifice was unnecessary. He was even twitted with his humble origin. All this criticism of stay-at-home critics, who took precious good care of their own skins, might have been ignored ; but it wounded the man, he felt it keenly, and when his final triumph came in the successful accomplishment of his last great expedition, he knew it had been gained at the cost of his life. Few who saw him on the morning of his marriage in Westminster Abbey but felt that his days were practically numbered. His life's work was done, but he had indelibly carved his name on the world's history.

On the 11th of June 1876 another gap was made in the ranks of the old Savages by the death of Walter Thornbury under the most distressing circumstances. I was personally acquainted with him, and frequently

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sat near him at the British Museum, and used to marvel at his energy and tremendous capacity for work. He died from physical breakdown, and mental disorder which necessitated his confinement. He was laid to rest near my dear old friend, Tom Hood, in Nunhead Cemetery. He contributed largely to *Household Words*, and subsequently to *All the Year Round*. He produced "Art and Nature at Home and Abroad," "British Artists, from Hogarth to Turner," as well as an excellent "Life of Turner." He was also the author of "Haunted London" and the first two volumes of "Old and New London"; a volume of stirring songs called "Songs of the Cavaliers and Roundheads," which met with great success. Indeed, he was a most voluminous writer, and as an art critic he enjoyed wide popularity, but the fierce fire of his energy destroyed him. Only a month before Thornbury's death another of my friends and a prominent Savage died, in the person of E. P. Hingston, the well-known theatrical manager and entrepreneur. He had been the lessee of the little Opera Comique, where amongst other things he produced were *Chilperic* and *l'œil Crève*. He was also manager of Spiers & Pond's, Hall by the Sea; an all-round, clever man and a genial good fellow.

In February 1877 the Club became poorer by the death of John Oxenford, for long the dramatic critic of *The Times*, and on 18th April of the same year my good friend, Andrew Halliday, passed away. He was laid to rest in Highgate Cemetery, in the presence

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of a very large gathering of mourners, including nearly eighty members of the Club.

On Wednesday, 6th March 1878, the Coming of Age Dinner was held in the banqueting hall of the Grosvenor Gallery, when George Augustus Sala occupied the chair, and among those present were Sir Garnet Wolseley, as he was then, Lieutenant George, Valentine Baker, Lord Mark Ker, Captain Fred Burnaby, Hepworth Dixon, Mr Alderman Cotton, M.P., all the Grossmiths, H. Van Laun, and a host of other distinguished people. In proposing the toast of the Savage Club the chairman said :

“ It is the toast of long life, health, and prosperity to an institution which has attained its majority, and is now in the twenty-first year of its age—the Savage Club. It is the toast of our noble selves. The toast will be received with enthusiasm, I have no doubt, for in drinking the toast you do not incur the slightest responsibility. I happened to be present the other evening at a public dinner, where the chairman, a most munificent man, a well-known baronet, and a Member of Parliament, contributed £200 to the funds of the charity, but subsequently took it out by pitching into it—the charity—and implying it was mismanaged. No such invidious task lies before me to-night. It is my pleasant and gratifying duty to bear my testimony to the worth of the gentlemen gathered here and to the admirable qualities of the Club. What is a club? It has been defined by a former Savage as a weapon of defence invented to

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keep off the white woman. So far as my experience goes, the Savages have always been tender to their squaws—and so far as I am personally concerned, I can say that during my fifty years I have never ceased to entertain the most passionate and Platonic affection for *La Belle Sauvage*. The learned and judicious Addison remarked that the foundation and origin of all celebrated clubs was in eating and drinking, because on all these points the majority of mankind were agreed. Though there is no greater admirer of Addison than your humble chairman, I venture to dissent altogether from his postulate. This Club had its origin in something beyond eating and drinking; and it is not by any means a convivial institution, but it is a society of literary men, artists, dramatists, comedians, gravitating together by a common sympathy for all that is beautiful and good. Our first Club-room was a very modest apartment indeed, and the few survivors of that gathering of young men are proud to see the distinguished company gathered to join in their festivity at the coming of age of their infant. There are clubs and clubs. I have belonged to a good many in my time, and my friend, Hepworth Dixon, can I daresay, also remember more or less aspiring literary gatherings which have had their apotheosis, and whose record is now written in the long history of the past. But among these disappearing ones the Savage holds its position, and promises to attain even more extensive dimensions, because it has always been true to itself, and utterly devoid of anything like pretensions or arro-

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gance. It is proud to see men of rank at its board, but it remains what it always was, a reunion of literary men, actors, artists, and men of science. At the same time I should be less than human were not a little bitter mingled with my sweet to-night, for looking round me, and seeing how happy, distinguished, and prosperous we are, I can but remember with softened grief how many dear friends were once members here with me. Nor could there be a more proper occasion than this to remind those Savages who have recently joined, and our distinguished visitors, of some of the earlier men among us, who, had they lived, would have made a noise in the world, and attained a brilliant position. I cannot refrain from speaking of Robert Brough, one of the founders of the Club, the merriest wit, a poet of the first water, whose writings never attained half the popularity they deserved, and only now linger in the memory of a few friends. Among our artistic founders was Charles Bennett, merriest and most facile of draughtsmen; Walter M'Connell, another gifted man; and especially do I mourn over the fate of our late president, Andrew Halliday, whose heart and purse were always open to the claims of all, and who, though dead, lives, and will live, in the hearts of his friends. Of this Society I had the honour of being a founder, and I may say that, as no institution long continues to fulfil the exact intention of its promoters, we did not dream when we began in our humble inn in Catherine Street that we should live to hail so magnificent a gathering as this in the

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Grosvenor Gallery. But in this development, in this advance towards prosperity, the Savage Club has always been what it was intended to be, a meeting of men drawn together by common sympathies, and by a determination to maintain the dignity of their professions of literature, art, and science."

CHAPTER VI

Annual dinner of the Savage Club—Great gathering of notabilities—Mr W. E. Gladstone's speech—Lord Mayor Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott entertains the Club at the Mansion House—Dr Bennett's tribute—Move to the Caledonian—Dinner at Willis's Rooms—H.R.H. Prince of Wales present—The Prince becomes a Savage—A memorable night—Death of Arthur Matthison—Death of Henry S. Leigh—"Broken Toys"—Death of Henry J. Byron—The Maori king, Tawhia, entertained—"Dead in the Desert"—London newspaper correspondents entertained.

ON Saturday, the 14th of June 1879, the annual dinner of the Club took place at the Pall Mall Restaurant, and was marked by the most brilliant array of notable guests that had ever partaken of the hospitality of the Savages at one time. To mention only a few, there were Mr W. E. Gladstone, M.P., Mr Frith, R.A., and the following distinguished members of the *Comédie Française* :—MM. Got, Delaunay, Baire, Monnet Sully, and M. Edmund About. The chair was most ably filled by Lord Dunraven, who had joined the Club years before, when he was Viscount Adair.

Henry J. Byron in a singularly witty speech replied for the Drama, and genial, clever Henri Van Laun, of whom I shall have something to say farther on, proposed the health of MM. Edmund About and Got in admirable French. Mr Gladstone responded for Literature, and paid a great compliment to the French

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guests by pointedly praising the elocutionary powers of the Frenchmen generally, who, he declared, were far ahead of Englishmen. He also struck a keynote by pathetically saying :

“It is very difficult and dangerous for any man who has cast his lot on the stormy ocean of politics to attempt the complete devotion, the entire and concentrated application of spirit, which literature in its higher senses requires.”

The guests and members were unanimous in praise of the entertainment, which was the most notable in the history of “The Little Club” up to that period.

On Saturday, 6th March 1880, the Club was entertained by the then Lord Mayor of London, Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott, at the Mansion House, on which occasion an original song was sung, the words being from the pen of Dr Bennett, of which I quote the last three verses :

“Think not that these hours are lost,
Each a gift devises
To ; to us from their hands are toss'd
Often life's best prizes.
Punch is our Medea's brew,
Here in this we're stewing
Old jokes young and worn wit new,
Humours of youth renewing,
Thought here gets more keen and bright,
Polished from the ravages
Of too much use, day and night
By us clever Savages.

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“And when on our wintry heads,
Age’s snows are hoary,
When some of us, in cold beds,
Lie tucked up in glory ;
Still for many and many a year,
We’ll of them be thinking,
Many a loving bumper here
We’ll to them be drinking.
Still with mingling joy and pain,
We’ll repair death’s ravages ;
In our praise they’ll live again,
Those old famous Savages.

“And, as all the table round,
Bottled up in glory,
In good spirits still are found
Undecayed in story
Through the ages yet to come
Our ghosts shall be walking,
When our tongues in death are dumb,
In theirs we’ll be talking.
Wondrous tales shall haunt each tongue,
Scorning all time’s ravages.
Of those who this song once sung
We—the mighty Savages.”

In the early part of 1881 the Club removed from the Caledonian Hotel to Lancaster House in the Savoy, where there was more accommodation. At the dinner on 17th July of that year Sir Philip Cunliff Owen, K.C., M.G., C.B., etc., took the chair, and presided over a brilliant assembly of guests and members. We now come to a red-letter day in the history of the famous Club—the twenty-fifth anniversary dinner on Saturday, 11th of February 1882. This dinner was held at Willis’s Rooms, and was honoured

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by the presence of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. One of the most treasured autographs in the Club's archives is the signature of his Royal Highness in the attendance-book.

The dinner was fixed for the unusual early hour of 5 P.M., and about 10 o'clock a move was made to the Club's own premises in the Savoy, and the Prince saw the Savages in their den. Of course, strangers were, on this particular occasion, rigorously excluded. There the Prince sat for some hours, smoking and enjoying the excellent programme of music, recitations, etc., and subsequently he expressed through Sir Francis Knollys his gratification at the reception he had met with, and assured his "Brother Savages" that he had passed a most agreeable and pleasant evening.

On 16th December 1887 a dinner was given to the special correspondents and artists who had been in the Egyptian campaign.

On Wednesday evening, 21st February 1883, Bro. Savage, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, again honoured the Club with his presence, and took the chair. My friend, Melton Prior, the distinguished war artist, delivered a lecture on the Egyptian War, illustrated with limelight views of his own drawings. The Prince was keenly interested, and that evening before he left the Club he was presented with a handsome album, containing portraits of all the members. That night was not the least memorable of many memorable nights in the history of the Club.

On 21st May 1883 the ranks of the old members

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were further thinned by the death of Arthur Matthison, the dramatic author. He had been ill for a long time, and made a trip to the Mediterranean in the hope of benefiting his health. His physical infirmities induced an irritability of temper which sometimes made him a butt for the wit of his brother members, and one day, when he was grumbling about something or another, James Albery, a fellow-dramatist, said to him: "Why, Matthison, old chap, when you get to heaven you'll kick up a row with the angels about the fit of your halo."

A little less than a month later, poor, genial Henry B. Leigh, followed his friend Matthison, with whom he had so often engaged in a passage of arms, into the shadows. He died in the early morning of 16th June 1883, aged forty-six. He was born in the Strand and died in the Strand, and was fond of saying he had scarcely ever been out of the Strand. He was a Christ's Hospital boy, and not only an acknowledged wit, but had a peculiar aptitude for versifying. His "Carols of Cockayne" are well known, and in 1871 he issued a little volume of comic poems under the title of "Gillot and Goosequill," which was dedicated to his "attached friend," Godfrey W. Turner. In an amusing preface he said: "To the reader's probable objection that my verses mean very little, I must reply (with all the modesty at my command) that I did not mean them to mean much more." I am tempted to quote from this volume a verse or two of a poem entitled "Broken Toys," in which the inner man himself speaks:

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"Whenever in my tender years
I broke a toy of any sort,
I honoured with a flood of tears
The damaged article of sport.
Folks told me I was very weak,
And very like a naughty boy
To make a streak on either cheek
For nothing but a broken toy.

"How oft the fleet and cruel years—
In bringing age and bringing care—
Have brought me fitter cause for tears
Than all my baby sorrows were.
How many hopes—how many dreams
'Twas theirs to give and then destroy ;
How many a past ambition seems
No better than a broken toy !

"I look on Money as a snare,
On Friendship as an empty name,
Of Health I utterly despair,
And soon shall cease to follow Fame.
Ambition once upon a time
Was all my passion, all my joy ;
And now—I scribble empty rhyme,
And dawdle o'er a broken toy."

One day a member brought into the Club a dusky gentleman wearing a turban. The visitor, owing to a deficiency of teeth, mumbled very much. Henry S. Leigh, who was present, and who was a good linguist, was asked by someone what language the Oriental was talking. "Why, gum Arabic, of course," promptly replied the wit. Leigh was never at a loss for a pun, and in repartee he would have been hard to beat. He died very suddenly at his chambers in the Strand,

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and a pathetic incident in connection with his passing was that a day or two before his death he was contemplating a little trip to the seaside to complete some literary work he was engaged upon, and looking in at the Club, he signed the attendance-book, and added P.P.C. How prophetic those letters were! Before he could depart on his trip Death claimed him.

On 11th July 1883, in order to raise funds for a Studentship in the Royal College of Music, the Club gave a grand costume ball at the Royal Albert Hall. Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, the late Duke of Albany, and several other members of the Royal family, were present as guests. It was a magnificent success, and the Press throughout the country devoted columns to descriptions of the great event. The first part of the programme was a miscellaneous entertainment by the Savages. The ball followed, with an interval at midnight for supper, the table being graced by the Royal party.

In April 1884 the Club sustained another heavy loss in the death of Henry J. Byron. He was only forty-nine when he died. Byron was one of the wittiest men of his age, and if all the jokes he is known to have uttered, and all he is alleged to have uttered, were put into print, they would make a very big volume. I can only spare space for one or two. When he was writing the burlesque of *The Forty Thieves*, Robert Brough suggested he should call it *The Eighty Legs*, or *The Pianoforte*. "No," said Byron; "I am calling it *The Thirty-nine Thieves*." "Why?" asked Brough.

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"Owing to the habit I have of taking one off."

One day he and Barry Sullivan (the well-known tragedian), who was deeply marked with the small-pox, were walking together, when Byron expressed surprise that his friend had never appeared in the character of Othello. "Well," said Sullivan, "the fact is I find it such a confounded nuisance getting the make-up out of these indentations," alluding to the small-pox marks.

"Oh, oh!" cried Byron. "Why, you are the first actor I have ever known to object to full pits."

Whilst Byron was running the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, which had financially ruined him, he was standing at the box entrance one morning looking very unwell and gloomy. A friend accosted him.

"How are you?" asked the friend,

"I've got the cobwebs, and feel glum."

"You should take a dose of castor oil," advised the friend; "that will clear you."

"I have taken the Theatre Royal (theatre oil), and that has done it," answered Byron.

On another occasion he invited two friends into a hostelry to quaff with him. In his own glass was a fly.

"Here, waiter," he called, "bring two more flies. This one isn't big enough to go round."

His first burlesque, *Fra Diavolo*, was produced at the Strand Theatre on the first night of Miss Swanborough's season, as far back as 1858. It was enormously successful, and was followed in rapid succession by many others, and managers clamoured for Byron's

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burlesques. He became the rage. He led a very busy life for many years, and produced a score or more of pieces. Besides his dramatic works he wrote at least one novel, and contributed extensively to periodical literature. He was a member of the Middle Temple, but never practised at the Bar. On 23rd October 1869 he made his first appearance in London as an actor at the Globe Theatre in his own drama, *Not such a Fool as he Looks*.

In June of 1884 the Club entertained the Maori king, Tawhia, who was on an official visit to London.

On 19th January 1885 a prominent member of the Club, J. A. Cameron, war correspondent for *The Standard*, was killed in the fighting that took place near Matemunch. In the thick of the fight he was lying down behind a dead camel making notes for his journal, when a bullet struck him full in the forehead. The news of his death was a shock to his brother Savages. The melancholy event drew from Mr Aaron Watson, journalist, novelist, and poet, some pathetic lines, which I venture to think are worth reproducing here.

DEAD IN THE DESERT

JOHN ALEXANDER CAMERON, KILLED JAN. 19th, 1885

What? Dead? Out there, the sand about your face,
The hot sun beating on the eyes I knew,
The Vulture circling round in hope to trace
The spot where your late comrades bury you.

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Dead in the desert ; and our other friend
Beside you dead. What wind was it that blew
You far away from England, to your end ;
You, whom we knew ?

I see a barren space of rolling plain,
And, far away, a river, streaming through
Defiles of rock, then stretching out again
To the horizon that is blank to you ;
And at my feet, upon a sandy rise,
Where e'en the brown mimosa never grew,
I see a white face staring at the skies,—
Yours, whom we knew.

Your comrades march along towards the Nile,
And Afric burns around them. Is it true
That you are lying stark and dead, the while
They still march on who marched along with you ?
You of the manly heart and manful head,
With eyes as open as the heaven's blue,
Do you indeed lie in the desert, dead ;
You, whom we knew ?

You are not lonely where you lifeless bide ;
Alas ! too many sleep along with you,
Where you are lying, all around is dyed
With blood of sons whom English mothers grew.
Far off your graves are, where we cannot reach,
But trust us that our love is strong and true ;
Hearts mourn, and many tears are dead, for each
Of those we knew.

The author of these verses is an old member of the Club, and a man of marked personality ; by sheer force of character has worked his way to a front position in the profession he has chosen, and not only has he occupied responsible positions in journalism, including the editorship of *The London Echo*, but has

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written charming verse, besides two or three novels; he has also held with distinction several important public positions.

On 21st June 1885 the Club gave a "Welcome Home" to the newspaper correspondents engaged in the Soudan, and many a kindly word was spoken of their friend and comrade, poor dead Cameron, whom they had left in his lonely grave in the burning desert sand. A little more than a year later—that is, on 7th July 1886—the twenty-ninth anniversary dinner was held, and the Colonial and Indian representatives at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition were entertained with the lavish hospitality for which the Club is renowned. An excellent entertainment, in the Club's best style, followed the dinner, and the visitors expressed themselves as highly delighted with their reception.

CHAPTER VII

A remarkable meeting with a friend of my youth—He utters a prophecy—

I become tragically interested in a great disaster—I visit the Continent—My uncle's fortune—I go out to Davos Platz—I suggest many improvements, but am laughed at—Issue a guide-book, and am mainly instrumental in getting the improvements carried out—I settle in the south of France—My friend the Prince—A Gilbertian situation—An extraordinary accident—How it affected me—I leave France, and proceed to Switzerland—Am appointed correspondent of *The Daily News*—The story of "John Bull's Neighbour in her true Light"—I meet with an accident on Mont Blanc—Narrow escape from death while crossing the Simplon Pass—I return to England, and take a house in Deal.

It is necessary that I should now return to my own humble self, and relate a remarkable incident, which has in it all the elements of romance. In the year 1878 I was in Scotland, and had been staying for some time at Rothesay. I had much literary work on hand, and for a long time contributed a weekly column of notes over the pen name of "The Rothesay Recluse" to the old *Greenock Advertiser*. In this year I was tragically interested in an event which made the year memorable to me, and it was prefaced by a coincidence so remarkable that I think it is worth recording here. I must premise it by stating that when I was a boy waiting for my orders to sail for India I was with staying my uncle, a Mr Henry Gregson Muddock, a prominent resident in Southampton. He was a bachelor, and a somewhat

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eccentric man, with rigid notions as to how a youth should conduct himself. Riches were his, and it was something like an article of faith in my family that I was to inherit his money. The stepping-stones to his fortune had been laid by my father; what more natural therefore, than that the grateful bachelor brother should remember the only son of the brother who had rendered him signal service, and pushed him on the road to wealth? There was one little factor however, that was left out of the calculation. It is true it wasn't generally known. I knew it, but attached no importance to it. It came about in this way.

During my sojourn with him at the time I refer to, I struck up an acquaintance with a youth a few years older than myself of the name of Archibald Scott. His parents were natives of Scotland, I believe, but had set up in business in Southampton, where Archibald was born. Scott and I were soon very friendly, and did a good many mad things together, though nothing but what healthy, roystering lads might be expected to do. These escapades, however, annoyed my uncle, with the result that he took a strong dislike to Scott, and not only forbade him coming to the house, but gave me strict injunctions to break off the connection. In spite of this, I continued to go about a good deal with my young companion, unknown, of course, to my relative. One day my uncle acquainted me with the fact that he intended to spend the afternoon and evening with some friends from Winchester, and enjoined me to be "a good lad";

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while the housekeeper, a dear old soul, was instructed to see that I didn't get into mischief. In the course of the afternoon I sent a message by another servant to Scott to come and see me. Needless to say, he accepted the invitation, and the good housekeeper entertained us with tea and buns. Then, by his request, she gave me permission to go out for a little while, as my uncle had left word that he would not be home until late. Scott proposed that we should spend the evening at the local theatre, a proposal I readily fell in with; and as we were swells in our way, being in possession of wealth to the extent of half-a-crown between us, we purchased pit seats. All unknown to us, my uncle with his friends sat in the boxes above us, and our presence did not escape him.

The next day I had a warm time of it. My offence of disobedience was considered an unpardonable one. Uncle vowed that he would never overlook it; not a shilling of his money should ever come to me. So I was assured, but it caused me no concern at that time. I was in the heyday of youth; life was before me. What did I want with uncle's money? He could keep it. I didn't say so, didn't think so, but I felt so. A fortnight later I sailed for India.

Twenty-two years passed, after many wanderings over the world, during which I never had any communication with my uncle or the companion of my youth—Scott.

One evening at the end of August 1878 my friend, the late Mr J. Wilson, who kept the Royal Hotel in Rothesay, invited me to dine with him, as he wished

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to introduce me to a lady and gentleman from Canada, who had recently been married, and were spending their honeymoon in Scotland. Accordingly I was introduced to "Mr Scott," who, when he heard my name, exclaimed: "Why, bless my life! Is it possible? Surely you and I were lads together in Southampton."

Of course, we compared notes. He, like myself, had wandered far and wide, seen life in all its phases, and had ultimately settled down in Canada. He had left England soon after I did, and it is not a little curious he had, in a sense, dogged my steps over the world. He had followed me to India, Australia, China, Java, Japan, America, and once we had actually been in Shanghai at the same time, but from the day of parting at Southampton we had never met until that memorable night in Rothelay. Naturally, he inquired about my uncle. I told him that I had never seen him again, but had heard years ago that he was married, and had a family.

"That's bad for you," he remarked, with a laugh; "but there," he added, "one never knows. It's the unexpected that always happens. Perhaps his money will come your way after all."

My reply to this I remember perfectly well, word for word. "My dear fellow," I said, "if my chances of heaven are as slender as my chances of my uncle's money coming to me, then there is no hope for me."

Now it is important for me to state that up to that evening, when I so unexpectedly met the friend of my boyhood again, my uncle had not been in my memory for some years. My wanderings had kept me out of

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touch with my family a good deal, and he had always held himself aloof from my branch of it. The last news I had of him was through my mother, who, referring to him in a letter to me, said: "I heard that your uncle Henry had to undergo an operation some time ago, but has quite recovered. I hope you keep in touch with him, as should he die before you, I have no doubt he will leave you his money."

Two or three days after that pleasant evening Mr Scott and his wife left Rothesay, and I have never seen them again. They were going to Liverpool, whence they were to leave for New York, on their way home to Canada. Two days after their departure—that is to say, on the 4th of September—I opened at luncheon-time the London *Daily Telegraph*, and saw the announcement of the appalling catastrophe on the Thames, when, owing to a collision with the *Bywell Castle*, the pleasure steamer *Princess Alice* was cut in halves, whereby 900 people lost their lives. With feelings that must be imagined, for they cannot be described, I read among the list of the dead the name of my uncle, Mr Henry Gregson Muddock, and all his family, including his only son. As I was to learn subsequently, he was one of the directors of the company owning the ill-fated vessel, and being the last trip of the season, he was induced to go with her, as his children had some cousins from Birmingham staying with them, and they wished to give them a treat; but they were all drowned. The most curious part remains to be told. My uncle—a careful and cautious man—died intestate; consequently I became

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his heir-at-law. I was the eldest son of the eldest brother. Unfortunately for me, he was at the time of his death comparatively poor, having suffered disastrous reverses through the failure of two or three companies, notably a Russian gas company, in which he had been largely interested. Nevertheless, a by no means to be despised sum was paid over to me when his estate was wound up, although twenty-two years before he had vowed I should never touch a penny piece of his money. But "L'homme propose, et Dieu dispose."

If the foregoing little narrative, true in every detail, had been invented by a novelist, it would have been considered improbable; but how often is it to be urged that truth is stranger than fiction? Nor is it less true that "there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will."

I may add that my uncle was one of the founders of the London Trading Bank, which is now a very flourishing concern. The shares he held at the time of his death were offered to me for a merely nominal sum, but being ill-advised, I declined the offer, as there was a liability on them.

Pending the winding up of my uncle's estate I made a tour on the Continent, and visited the battlefields of Alsace and Lorraine. I spent over a week at Metz, and stayed in the hotel which had been occupied by Bazaine during the memorable siege. The house was still in possession of the landlord who held it in Bazaine's time, and he told me many interesting stories, many of which reflected very discredibly

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on the French Marshal. As I can furnish no proof, however, of the narrator's accuracy, I refrain from recording them. From other sources of information, however, I had every reason to think that Bazaine was quite unfitted for his position, and many errors of judgment on his part paved the way for the final disaster. I also spent some days at Strasbourg, and made the acquaintance of the old Frenchman who had charge of the watch-tower of the magnificent Cathedral. He had stuck to his post all through the terrible bombardment, and he assured me that the Germans deliberately made the Cathedral a mark for their artillery, and did their utmost to destroy it. It will be remembered that the Cathedral was seriously damaged, and the organ, one of the most wonderful instruments of its kind in the world, was practically destroyed. It was an act of unpardonable vandalism, more in accordance with traditions of the Middle Ages than of the troops of a highly civilised nation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Strasbourg at the time of the war was considered a place of great military strength. Yet it succumbed; but to-day it is probably absolutely impregnable. The Germans have resolved that Alsace and Lorraine shall never again pass out of their possession, but it is doubtful if there is a Frenchman living who doesn't dream of the day when the proud flag of France will once again float over those fair provinces.

I subsequently wandered pretty extensively through Germany, including the Black Forest; paid a flying visit to Russia, and returned home to receive my

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money. About the end of 1879, having entered into a literary contract which required a good deal of attention, I was anxious to spend the winter in some quiet place, and by the merest chance made my way to Davos Platz in Switzerland, and while there I became acquainted with John Addington Symonds, who was building himself a villa in that beautiful valley, which he seemed to think he had discovered and owned. Symonds was a strange man, saturated with Italian and French literature, and holding, as it seemed to me, a rather poor opinion of the literature of other countries. He was a confirmed invalid, and told me that Davos was the only place that, so far as his experience went, offered him any hope of recovery. It is testimony to the salubrity of the beautiful Davos Valley that he lived as long as he did. When I met him he was exceedingly ill, and I did not think he would see another year out. But he lived for several years, and literature was the gainer. When I first knew Davos it was a very primitive place compared with what it is at the present day. The drainage was as bad as it could be; there was a poor water supply, and the River Landwasser wound through the valley like a huge serpent, and when the snows melted it overflowed its banks, turning the bed of the valley into a swamp, thus producing miasmatic exhalations, which necessarily detracted from the value of the place as a health resort. Davos was reached from two points on the Zurich and Chur Railway. The shorter of the two was from Landquart, whence a seven-hour diligence or sleigh journey was necessary.

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The other was from the terminus at Chur, and from there the journey up to the valley occupied about nine hours. For the healthy and strong either route was pleasant and interesting enough, but in the winter-time exceedingly trying owing to the intense cold. For invalids it was an ordeal that occasionally led to fatal attacks of hæmorrhage. Recognising as I did the magnificent possibilities of this Alpine station, and becoming convinced that it offered to the victim of the terrible scourge, consumption, a chance of better health, if not an absolute cure, I resolved to try and make it better known to my countrymen, as well as to induce the authorities to render it more accessible, and to carry out certain improvements. I suggested drainage, a straightening of the river, an adequate water supply, and finally a railway. In this I was backed up by a most enterprising gentleman, Mr J. C. Coester, who, an invalid himself, had done much for the valley, and was the owner of the Hotel Belvedere, which catered entirely for English-speaking people. My suggestions met with ridicule. I was told that drainage wasn't necessary; that as the river was, so it had been for hundreds of years; that a railway would be too costly, and would never pay. I there-upon resolved to publish a book, and tell the truth about Davos. I must not omit to state there was a capital little book on Davos already in existence. It had been written by a Mrs MacMorland, a charming and clever lady, who knew the valley well. But she had devoted too much of it to botany, and too little to the subjects which it was desirable that the invalid

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and non-scientific visitor should know. The title of the book was "Davos Platz" by "One who knows it." I had it from the lips of Mrs MacMorland herself, however, that her work had fallen far short of her anticipations in point of sale. She and her husband had lived in the valley for a long time, and were greatly interested in its welfare. To the end I had in view, I associated myself with Mr Philip Holland, a clever and well-known analytical chemist, and a Fellow of the Chemical Society. He had a large laboratory in Manchester, and was the public analyst for the borough of Southport. This gentleman came out to Davos, and we began by analysing the air by Angus Smith's process, taking samples from the hotels, the bedrooms of the patients, from the mountain-sides, from the banks of the river—every conceivable point, in fact, that was likely to furnish us with data—and we proved conclusively that away from the village the air was absolutely pure; in the village it was polluted. We next subjected the water, and various articles of food, particularly milk, to analysis, with unsatisfactory results, so far as milk and water were concerned. We spent a portion of that summer in the valley, and returned to it the following winter. In due course our book was launched, and I did not hesitate to severely criticise the lack of drainage and other easily remedied defects of Davos. The work was extensively and favourably reviewed by the leading papers in the United Kingdom, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that it staggered the good people of Davos Platz. They knew to what

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an extent they were dependent upon English and American money, principally English, and they were afraid my strictures would turn the flow of gold away. The medical profession too was stirred, and I received scores of letters from doctors throughout the country. But the funniest part of it was, two anonymous communications bearing the Davos postmark were sent to me—one written in very bad English, and the other in fairly good French, but each threatened me with assassination if I dared to set foot in Davos again. Thereupon I promptly betook myself thither, and caused my presence to be widely known. But my friends, the anonymous letter writers, must have thought better of their threats, and I had no opportunity of testing my markmanship with a very neat little revolver I carried solely as a means of self-protection.

My friend Coester informed me that he was trying to persuade the people to take a sensible view of my criticism, and instead of being angry, carry out my suggestions as to drainage to begin with. His persuasions prevailed; two years later I had the satisfaction of issuing a new edition of my guide and in the preface I wrote :

“In the first edition of this Guide we felt called upon to severely criticise the want of drainage in the village, it is with considerable satisfaction therefore, that we now feel ourselves in a position to announce that our criticism has had weight, and we gladly bear testimony to the energetic spirit that has been

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displayed to do away with the cause of what was readily acknowledged to be a just complaint. From the plans that we publish with this edition, the public will see that a most elaborate system of drainage has been carried out regardless of cost."

In due course the water supply followed, then the winding river was canalised, and finally, a few years later a railway was built from Landquart right into the valley, and before it was opened to the public I was privileged to travel over the whole route on an engine. There is one other little matter in connection with Davos which I think I am justified in mentioning. I resolved that my country people should be attended by an English medical man, and I prevailed upon my friend, Dr William R. Huggard, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., London, to go to Switzerland. He, by the way is, not an Englishman, but an Irishman ; as I do not wish to do an injustice to poor old Ireland, I gladly mention this fact. Dr Huggard duly qualified for the Swiss diploma in Geneva during my residence there, and ultimately took up his residence in Davos. That is more than twenty years ago, and I venture to say, what Dr Huggard cannot say himself, he has been a boon to the place. As I write, he is still practising there, and also has the honour to represent His Majesty Edward VII. in the capacity of Consul. Long may he have health and strength to carry on his work, and gladden and comfort those who seek his advice. It was while I was interesting myself in Davos that efforts were being made to

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develop the most beautiful and glorious part of the Engadine known as the Maloja. An eccentric and wealthy Belgian Count had been in the habit of hunting there ; suddenly he conceived the idea of building a hotel on a gigantic scale, and he engaged the services of a medical friend of mine to superintend all the sanitary and other arrangements. The plans were, in the first instance, I believe, designed by the Count himself, and the building he proposed to erect was a palace. The bedrooms alone numbered something like five hundred, and the total cost of the place, including purchase of land, would have been something like £2,000,000 sterling. Needless to say, these plans had to be very considerably modified, but still the Count was determined to have some of his ideas put into practical shape. He and his wife spent three or four years there, winter and summer, during the progress of the work, and I paid many visits to my friend. The undertaking proved disastrous to the poor Count. His wife, owing to anxiety and exposure to all weathers, was taken very ill, and died on her way to Belgium. The Count was financially ruined, and the failure of his ambitious projects broke his heart. Nevertheless, the gigantic hotel was opened, and I attended the inaugural ceremony. The house was heated by what was then a novel arrangement, hot air being conducted to every room by means of pipes let into the walls. The air was supplied from the basement, where there was a huge boiler and an engine, the latter driving the air over an electrical machine, which was said to

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ozonise it. The second night of my stay it was bitterly cold, and on retiring to my bedroom I turned a tap to let in the hot air, and went to bed. Some time afterwards I awoke with a sense of horrible oppression, and felt I was suffocating. It appeared that owing to some defect in the pipe foul gas had been coming into my room mixed with hot air, and it was within an ace of cutting short my career. The following year I was again at the Maloja, and met the late Max Müller, a giant of intellect, yet one of the most charming and modest men I have ever known.

Simultaneously with my book on Davos I prepared the material for a guide-book to Switzerland, and in pursuance of my plan practically tramped over all the country. I crossed every pass both in winter and in summer, ascended many of the mountains, wandered through the most secluded valleys. With an immense mass of notes I went to the south of France, acquired possession of an ideal little villa at Villefranche overlooking the beautiful bay of the same name, and there spent two and a half happy and delightful years. I prepared my book for publication, making frequent journeys to England in the meanwhile, and keeping in touch with my brother Savages.

Adjoining the grounds of my little residence was a superb mansion — a palace, in fact — that had long been without a tenant. It owed its erection to a wealthy hotel proprietor in Nice, but he had found it too costly to live in. A few months after I had entered on possession of my villa, the mansion was bought by Prince Nicholas d'Oldenburg, cousin of the then

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Czar of Russia. One morning, to my intense astonishment, I received a request from the Prince, asking me if I would allow the necessary deeds and agreements to be signed in my house, and if in my "capacity of an English literary gentleman" I would witness them. Appreciating the compliment, as well as the honour, he paid me, I readily assented, and a little army of notaries, witnesses, and hangers-on tramped into my drawing-room, where the business was carried through. Prince d'Oldenburg and I from that moment became friends, and our friendship strengthened as time went on. His wife, who was a Countess in her own right, and his two young daughters, were charming; while the Prince himself, a delicate and nervous man, was one of the most polished gentlemen it has ever been my good fortune to be acquainted with, nor have I ever had a more sincere, devoted, or truer friend. I was his confidant, and to a considerable extent his adviser. He was very fond of a practical joke, and on one occasion placed me in a position which would have made a capital situation in a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. I accompanied him to Marseilles on a matter of business which he was anxious to have carried out by a German friend of mine, a commission agent who had formerly been in business in London, but married a Marseilles lady, and had taken up his residence in that town. The Prince, I may mention, was a wealthy man, and did everything with a lavish hand. We left Nice by the midnight train in a special saloon carriage, which, much against my wish, he insisted on having; and though we were only going for two or

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three days, he took luggage enough for a voyage round the world. His valet accompanied him, and one of his body servants came to attend to my humble wants.

We arrived in Marseilles in the morning, and the Prince asked me if I would mind riding with him in one of the common fiacres plying for hire. In the meantime the servants had been sent on with the luggage, and had been instructed to secure rooms for us at the Grand Hotel de Marseilles, and as I subsequently learned, they had also received other instructions in order that the Prince might carry out his little joke. Having partaken of some coffee at the buffet at the station, my friend and I jumped into a fiacre, and drove off to the hotel. Arrived there, he quickly threw open the door, sprang out, and extended his hand to me. Knowing his extreme politeness, this did not strike me as being extraordinary; but as we entered the magnificent hall of the hotel there was a row of white-gloved flunkies on each side, while the *chef de reception* in evening dress approached me, and bowing low, addressed me as "Monseigneur le Prince." I said quickly: "You are mistaken. I am not the Prince." Then up spoke my friend, and in gentle reprimand remarked: "Monseigneur, you do carry this little joke of yours too far. Please spare my feelings on this occasion." Then to the chef: "Show the Prince at once to his rooms."

Protest on my part seemed useless. The army of flunkies bowed almost to the ground; the chef led the way up the flight of broad stairs to the second

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floor, and throwing open a door, revealed a magnificently furnished sitting-room. Whereupon the Prince exclaimed indignantly: "Oh, this is far too high up for Monseigneur; besides, that is an inferior room." The chef was agitated; he made profound apologies, marched us down to the first floor, and bowed us into a costly suite of rooms, which the Prince said he thought might do. I again attempted to let the chef understand that I was not the Prince; but with a splendid assumption of indignation my friend held up his hands, and prayed of me not to make him look foolish again. Then in an aside to the puzzled chef he explained that I was eccentric, and much given to practical joking. When we were alone he laughed heartily, and notwithstanding my protests, declared that I should be the Prince while we were there. He had instructed his servants to tell the hotel people that I was certain to try and impose upon them by pretending that I was not the Prince, but they were to pay me every deference and respect.

I had previously written to my German friend, inviting him to lunch with us at our hotel, and as I was not sure of the time of arrival when I wrote, I said I would call at his place of business, and convey him back. Prince Nicholas knew this, and reminded me that I had better go. He would order the luncheon, he said. I descended the stairs, ran the gauntlet of the bowing flunkeys, and on gaining the pavement, beheld a magnificent carriage, and my servant, in uniform, holding the door open for me. When I had entered, he mounted on the box beside

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the driver, and I was driven to the commission agent's office in a dingy business quarter of the town, and when he saw the magnificent carriage, he was overpowered. However, I persuaded him to enter ; and we drove back to the hotel ; and there were the chef and his flunkies bowing low, while passers-by stopped to see who the great personage was who had alighted from the carriage and was received with so much homage. But a greater surprise was in store for me and my German friend. The table in the private sitting-room of the suite had been laid with a sumptuousness that set the German's eyes agog. Silver, flowers, and fruit were in lavish profusion, while round each plate, in accordance with Russian fashion, were something like a dozen glasses of assorted sizes. A basket containing a dozen of champagne stood in one corner of the room, and another basket of white and red wine near it. Three solemn-looking waiters in livery, and the valet, bowed as we entered.

The German was rather appalled. He was a very plain, unostentatious man, in the habit of taking his lunch about one o'clock at a cheap restaurant, and tempting his appetite with nothing more delicate than sauerkraut and sausage, washed down with a bock of lager beer. Of course, I had to occupy the chair the Prince should have taken. He sat on my right, the guest on the left, while the valet paid special attention to me. The Prince was a very small and delicate eater, and scarcely ever drank wine. Yet dish after dish was brought in, and in most cases sent away untouched. The numerous glasses were filled with wine,

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and remained filled. Once or twice when the German addressed me as Monsieur Muddock the Prince affected to be very indignant, and expressed surprise that the guest should forget himself so.

The farce—and a costly farce it was—came to an end in about three hours. It was all very comical, and I can hardly think of it now without a smile; but the smile is checked as I recall how my dear and eccentric friend, Prince Nicholas d'Oldenburg, within four years of that day lay dead in a hotel in Geneva, his death accelerated by a cruel domestic blow, which broke his heart. A kinder, more charitable, more generous heart never beat in human breast.

It is not a little curious that throughout my life my movements seem to have been influenced by some sudden and unexpected event; and my departure from the south of France, where I had resided for nearly two and a half years, was determined by a peculiar and tragic incident.

It was the Jour de l'an. I had but recently returned from England, where I had been on a visit, bringing with me a quantity of furniture and pictures for my house, as I had made up my mind to settle down for some time at anyrate. As most people know, New Year's Day in France is a great day. Visits are exchanged, and presents given and received. All through the fore part of the day I was kept busy receiving visitors, and in the afternoon a friend, who had been invited to dine with me, arrived, and he and I sat on the verandah enjoying a cigar and the beauty of the land and sea scape. The

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weather was perfect, the garden portion of my grounds, which consisted of a series of rocky terraces on a hillside, was a blaze of colour with roses and other flowers. Some Italian workmen were blasting the rock away in a part of the grounds in order to make a carriage drive from the road to the house. Suddenly there was a commotion among them; I saw them drop their tools and rush down to the road.

"What is the matter?" I called to one.

"A gentleman has shot himself and a lady," came back the answer.

My friend and I rushed out, and we found a man kneeling over a handsomely dressed woman, who was lying on her back, unconscious and terribly injured, while blood was dripping from a wound in his head and falling on her clothes. It seemed to confirm the report that he had shot the woman and himself.

I must explain that the road opposite my dwelling was bordered by a row of formidable cacti bushes; for the land thereabouts broke away precipitously, and plunged in a series of broken cliffs to the sea, two hundred feet or so below. On questioning the man, I soon learned the facts. He turned out to be a Mr Cross, of the well-known Crosses of Bolton, Lancashire. The lady was the wife of his intimate friend, an officer of the Guards Blue, and the party had been staying at Monte Carlo. Mr Cross had, I believe, recently come into a large fortune through the death of his father. A buggy had been built in Nice to his order, and a pair of magnificent cobs purchased in England. They had arrived the day before, and

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in order to try them Mr Cross, accompanied by the wife of his friend, the friend being prevented by some reason, which I forget, from going, was driving to Nice, and had promised to be back in time for dinner. On getting near my house the spirited cobs took fright at a bullock dray laden with stones jolting along the road. Tearing madly along, they dashed into the cacti hedge, the impact jerking Mr Cross and the lady out on to the rocks; while the horses and buggy whirled down the cliffs, and were pulverised.

Seeing that the case was serious, I instructed the workmen to carry the lady into my house; but Prince d'Oldenburg, who had arrived on the scene with a Russian doctor who was staying with him, suggested that as he had more accommodation in his chateau, it would be better for the injured people to be taken there. To this, of course, I assented. Then special messengers were sent post-haste for surgeons, as the Russian doctor said a serious operation on the lady would be necessary. I myself sat for some time by her bedside, filing the rings off her fingers, as the hand was much injured and greatly swollen, the rings being embedded in the flesh. Mr Cross, who with heroic fortitude had his own injury temporarily attended to took every means possible to ensure his friend's wife having the benefit of all the skill money could secure. A messenger was despatched in one of the Prince's carriages to Monte Carlo to bring back the husband, and a celebrated German specialist in Berlin was telegraphed for. In the meantime, however, the unfortunate lady was operated upon, and the doctors

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declared that her life depended upon absolute quietude, and that it would be dangerous to move her for many weeks, unless it was done there and then. This was very awkward for Prince d'Oldenburg. The Russian Christmas was near, and he expected a large number of guests. Therefore to have an invalid in the house, big as it was, whose life depended upon quietude, was unfortunate. Mr Cross endeavoured to obtain a house near by, but failed. Then in despair he came to me. The lady could be carried from the room in the Prince's house where she was lying through a gap in the boundary fence without any difficulty, and it was only a matter of yards. He offered me a price, and under the circumstances what could I do but accept? In a few hours I had cleared out with all my belongings, and found myself in a Nice hotel, wondering what I should do and where I should go to. In a few days I had resolved to proceed to Geneva in the interest of my guide-books. When I arrived there, the town was buried in snow, and everything frozen. It was a violent change from the warmth and sunlight of the south of France. But I was used to sudden changes, and, moreover, had made up my mind that as soon as possible I would proceed to Southern Italy ; but here again my movements were influenced by chance.

I had been in Geneva two or three weeks, when one evening I entered a café with a view to dining. A gentleman was seated at a table having his dinner, and as I entered he stared at me, I at him. Then he rose, and greeted me with exclamations of surprise.

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We were brother Savages, brother writers. He was the late William Westall, the novelist and journalist. I joined him at dinner. He had been living in Geneva for a long time as Swiss correspondent of *The Daily News*, but was leaving in a day or two, and had been asked by Mr (afterwards Sir John) Robinson to try and find somebody to take up his position. "Write this very night," he counselled. "You'll get the appointment." I wrote. My application was favourably considered, and so I served *The Daily News* as their Swiss correspondent for something like six years. During all that time my relations with the late Sir John Robinson were of the most agreeable kind; for he was a courteous gentleman, and recognised in a most liberal way the efforts of those who served him well. When I resigned my position (owing to circumstances I shall presently relate) in the summer of 1887, he wrote me a charming letter, from which I permit myself to quote the following passage :—

"I wish you every success in your new sphere, but I am afraid we shall suffer by the change."

That part of my life spent in Switzerland was a very happy one, save for the sadness inseparable from the loss of my eldest sister and many dear friends. I secured a quaint, old residence at a place called Grange Canal, on the Chamouni Road, and about a mile and a half from the town. Much correspondence passed between me and my friend, Prince d'Oldenburg,

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and while I was still in Geneva he died at the Hotel de Russie in that town. The causes that led to his being in Geneva were pitiable and sad, but I am not at liberty to make them known.

When I first went to Geneva there was a large colony of Russian refugees, mostly Nihilists, and I made the acquaintance of many of them. It was through this acquaintance I gathered the material for my Russian story, which I called "Stormlight," now published by Ward & Lock. I may mention that some of my generous critics, who find criticism so easy, spoke of the improbabilities of the story, but, as a matter of fact, most of the incidents are strictly true. The materials were supplied to me by my Russian acquaintances.

Among my friends in Geneva were Mr Auldgo, then the British Consul, who some time in the thirties made an ascent of Mont Blanc, and published a book about it; and the late James Henry Skene, who saw much service during the Crimean War, and gave his experiences in two volumes, "With Lord Stratford in the Crimea." He was the father-in-law of the then Archbishop of York, the late Archbishop Thomson. Mr Skene had been H.M. Consul at Aleppo for many years, and had lived among the Arabs as a sheik for a long time. He was a brilliant scholar, a remarkable linguist, and a charming man. His brother, the late William Skene, was Historiographer Royal for Scotland. My friend's career had been an extraordinary one. In his childhood he had met Sir Walter Scott, and preserved a vivid recollection of him. He had

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travelled most extensively through Syria, Turkey, Persia, and Palestine, and given to the world a most interesting volume entitled "Rambles in Syrian Deserts." During the Crimean War he was on the staff of Lord Stratford, and had some exciting times. He was severely wounded in a skirmish, and the wound troubled him to the day of his death. He married for his first wife a Greek lady of great beauty, and his eldest daughter Zoe became the wife of Archbishop Thomson. Skene was a most accomplished man. He was a thorough Hebrew scholar, and knew all the dialects of Arabic, and he was possibly the best living authority of his day on Arab horses. He had a passion for horses, and maintained that the Arab was the finest horse in the world. There were not many subjects he could not converse about, and withal he was a charming singer and excellent musician. He had been ailing for some time before his death, but I did not think his end was so near. I helped to nurse him, and was with him when he died. I followed him to the grave, and need I say his death was a great blow to me.

During my residence in Switzerland the Germans annexed portions of the island of New Guinea, and the adjacent islands of New Britain and New Ireland, owing to the fatuous policy of Lord Carnarvon and Lord Derby. From personal knowledge I was enabled to supply my paper with a long descriptive article about those islands, which appeared in the issue for 29th December 1884. When the Fenians attempted to destroy the Houses of Parliament and the Tower, the detectives could not discover how the

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dynamite which was used had been procured. I was credibly informed by a Polish friend of mine, who was much behind the scenes, that it was conveyed to London from Switzerland by two women, who carried it in their bustles, and this fact I made known through the columns of *The Daily News*. Up to that period there was little or no difficulty in procuring dynamite in Switzerland, but afterwards the laws regulating its sale were made more stringent.

I am now going to reveal a little secret ; it is not a State secret, nor is the revelation likely to disturb the peace of mind of any of his Majesty's liege subjects. Nevertheless, what I have to tell may be read with some amusement and interest.

While I was resident in Geneva two books were issued by the famous Paris house of Charpentier et Cie. One was called "Les Va-Nu-Pieds de Londres," by Hector France ; the other "La Rue à Londres," by MM. Jules Valles and A. Lançon. The first named was published at 3 francs 50 centimes, the second at 100 francs. "La Rue à Londres" was beautifully got up and wonderfully illustrated, but, of course, its price prevented it running into a large sale. It was, however, extensively quoted. The other was not illustrated ; it was intended for the masses, and the masses read it. Both these books, as their titles imply, dealt with England, and were supposed to be true pictures of English life ; they were written in a spirit which nowadays seems incomprehensible. Hector France's book was rabid with hatred against English women, English laws, institutions, habits,

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manners, customs—everything that was English ; and the writer, who was himself a purveyor of filth, wrote in the most filthy language. Moreover, his so-called descriptions of the life he pretended to describe were absolutely false. But the French Press believed them, and they were made the text for violent abuse of England ; and not the French Press only, but that of Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Germany. I read these books and the articles of comment on them with a sense of anger and burning indignation. Wherever I went I was almost sure to hear them discussed, and the discussion was never favourable to England. “Horrible London,” Horrible England,” “The beastly English” (*Ces bêtes d’Anglais*), these were phrases that were constantly ringing in my ears. The blood in my veins used to dance, and I longed to say something in return. The question was, how, and through what medium to say it. A fugitive article or two in a paper or magazine would have been useless. But my opportunity came at last, as it generally has come, sooner or later, throughout my life. The very plausible French gentleman, Max O’Rell, had issued an English translation of his “John Bull and His Island,” the translation being specially toned down for the English market. Of course, it was amusing, although it contained a good many cheap sneers. England was laughing at it. Monsieur Max O’Rell, from an obscure schoolmaster, had suddenly become a person of importance ; but it is needless to say the English people who were pouring out such lavish praise of O’Rell’s pamphlet had not

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read it in the original, and knew nothing whatever of the books to which I have alluded, nor of the Anglo-phobia then raging on the Continent. One day I saw an editorial announcement in an English literary weekly that Mr Somebody was writing an answer to "John Bull and His Island." Instantly I asked myself: "Why shouldn't I write an answer?" I knew France, I was living on the Continent, and I had material for any number of answers. But let me make it clear that Max O'Rell's work was only a *raison d'être* for mine. I wanted to answer Hector France and Jules Valles, and the thousand and one articles that had appeared in the Continental papers. As I could see no just cause or impediment why I should not produce a counterblast, I at once set to work with the energy I could always command when there was work to be done, and the result was there came into existence "John Bull's Neighbour in her true Light," by a "Brutal Saxon." As evidence of how short-sighted English publishers can sometimes be, most of those in London turned up their noses at my book without ever seeing the MS. I was assured on all sides there would be no demand for it. Curiously enough, Max O'Rell's own publishers, Field & Tuer of The Leadenhalle Presse, made me a definite offer without seeing a line of the copy. They would pay down £25, and more if a certain number were sold. I declined it, and wrote at once to Wyman & Sons, who were the printers of my guide-books, for an estimate. I received it, accepted, and wired them instructions to print 25,000 copies with all possible

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speed, and secure so many pages of advertisements. Back came a letter urging me to be advised by them, who knew so much better than I did, and not waste my money by printing any such number, as they were sure the book would not sell, and they did not want a good customer of theirs to lose money. In a weak moment I allowed myself to be influenced by their arguments, and ordered 10,000. As a matter of fact, with the first machining they only ran off five. The book was to be published on a Wednesday, I think, in March of 1884. As I intended to be in London on that day, I left Geneva by the night train on the previous Friday, intending to spend two or three days in Paris with some friends. When I arrived early on the Saturday morning at the house of my friends in the Avenue du Trocadero, the concierge said: "There is a *depêche* for you, Monsieur Muddock. You'll find it in your bedroom." I rushed upstairs, tore open the telegram, and read the following:—

Large orders for book coming in. Please send us instructions. WYMANS.

My state of mind may be imagined. It was Saturday, a short day in London. Sunday intervened, and I knew that any failure to supply the orders on the fixed date of publication would ruin the book, and that to bind twenty or thirty thousand copies would take several days. I was too late for the morning train to England, but I left Paris by the night mail. On

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arriving in London on Sunday morning I drove off to Mr Edward Wyman's house in Russell Square without even waiting to wash up or change my travelling dress. I found my friend about proceed to church with his family. However, he remained behind, and I was informed that large orders had been received from Smith & Sons, Hamilton & Co., and other firms, subject to delivery early on date of publication. "But," added Mr Wyman, "it is impossible for us to do it." I am afraid my answer rather shocked and startled him. I reminded him that any failure on the part of his firm would mean an action at law, and possibly swinging damages against them. "There is no such thing as impossibility in this case," I added. "The work *must* be done." The emphasis I laid on the "must" caused him to open his eyes. "But there isn't time," he urged. "You must *make* time," I responded. This time the emphasis was on the "make."

Poor Mr Wyman! I much fear I disturbed his Sunday rest, spoilt his dinner, and ruffled his temper. But—well, the orders were executed. In a few days all London, all England, was clamouring for the book. Edition after edition was poured from the press, and within three weeks "A new and enlarged Edition" was issued, and contained an advertisement of Field & Tuer's, announcing the "Forty-eighth Thousand" of "John Bull and His Island." Other advertisements were also secured at a big price, but by an act of stupidity were accepted without any stipulations as regards extra pay for extra editions. Of course, there was a strong desire and a natural

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one to know who the "Brutal Saxon" was, and many were the guesses made. The "Paris correspondent" of *The Manchester Guardian* blundered egregiously in certain statements he sent to his journal from Paris; and a would-be clever scribe on the staff of *The Newcastle Chronicle* blundered even worse, and they both were pilloried in a new preface to the book. Through an agent the rights of translation were sold for France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Russia. A French author bought the French rights. He had the book printed, and all ready for issue, when down swooped his Government, and stopped it. A large edition was issued in Germany, and tickled the Germans immensely.

In the course of three or four weeks I returned to the Continent. I found the French papers pouring out their vials of wrath on the head of "A Brutal Saxon," and one evening as I sat with some friends outside the Café de la Paix in Paris, two excited Frenchmen were discussing "John Bull's Neighbour." That very day either *Le Temps* or *Débats* had printed a long editorial comment, and I heard one of the French gentlemen exclaim:

"Sacré nom Dieu, if I knew who 'A Brutal Saxon' was I'd shoot him."

I felt inclined to put him to the test, but my friends prevailed. The stir that little book made, practically all over Europe, was remarkable; and those wise-aces who predicted dismal failure for it must have felt rather small as they saw huge edition after edition called for. I am not going to state how much money

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was made out of it, but author, publishers, and printers were quite satisfied.

I followed "John Bull's Neighbour" with "The Siege of London by Posteritas." The French Government did allow a translation of *that* in France; it was published by Marpon & Flammarion. The sale of the work in England fell very far short of its precursor, but it made a profit of several hundred pounds.

Of course, there were many little exciting incidents in my Swiss experiences, but I need only inflict one or two on my readers. I had been up Mont Blanc one day with a party, when we were overtaken by night and bad weather, and we were imprisoned for many hours at the *Grand Mulets*. So terrific was the wind that we expected every moment the little hut would have been hurled from the rocks to which it was anchored, and so intense and awful was the cold that the stronger ones of the party had to pommel the weaker ones, and fight with them, to prevent them sleeping. As soon as there was sufficient daylight we resolved to make an attempt to go down. My guide led, I was second on the rope, but it was impossible to see a dozen yards ahead on account of the snow. In crossing a crevasse the snow bridge broke under me, and I hung suspended by the rope over an awful chasm. I managed to scramble out, but either in falling or getting out the notched end of the piolet I was carrying pierced my thigh; but though I lost a great deal of blood I did not know I was wounded until we had cleared the glaciers, and began to thaw under the influence of hot spiced

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wine in the Pierre Pointue inn. I tramped through the forest, however, down to my hotel in Chamouni, and in a few days was all right, but the scar remains to remind me of the adventure.

On another occasion, accompanied by a young American gentleman, and a guide and porter, I set off for a place known as the *Jardin*—the ordinary route to which is simply a little promenade, and a favourite with ladies. But there is an alternative route, which presents more difficulties. The glacier of the Montanvert is left, and a steep, stone-swept couloir climbed. Thence the lower slope of the *Aiguille Vert* is crossed. While my little party were on this slope the snow, which was very bad, began to move, and we were carried down on a slow-moving avalanche, fortunately for an inconsiderable distance, but were only saved from being swept over a precipice with a drop of about 500 feet, by some rocks which cropped up in our way.

I had another narrow squeak when crossing the Simplon in the depth of winter from Italy. At Berisal, the last post hamlet before Brigue, the open sleigh was changed for a wheeled diligence, and we tore down the serpentine road at marvellous speed, the four horses being managed with consummate skill. At a very steep and dangerous curve water had flowed over the road and become compact ice. Here the lumbering vehicle skidded sideways towards the precipice. I was jammed up in the *coupé*, which was little larger than a good-sized bandbox. I recognised the peril, but to have jumped out, as one could

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have done from an open sleigh, was an impossibility. Two travelling pedlars in the body of the vehicle, whom we had picked up on the way, cried out in despair, and made a frantic effort to escape, but could not open the door. The driver had seen the danger instantly, and with commendable presence of mind lashed the horses into a gallop, keeping them close to the mountain side of the road. As the ponderous vehicle swung round it was poised for a moment on two wheels, and the hind part hung over the precipice. As soon as we were dragged into safety the restive horses were stopped. Out sprang the pedlars; they were as pale as death, and I saw them devoutly cross themselves. I walked back, and stood on the edge of the precipice. There was a clear fall of over 1000 feet on to Needle rocks. As I gazed into the depths I felt that we had escaped utter annihilation by the skin of our teeth only, and a line from Euripides occurred to me:

“How pleasant it is for him who is saved to remember his danger.”

The time came at last when I had to fold up my tent and move to fresh ground. I have been moving on all my life. My removal from beautiful Geneva, however, was precipitated by the bad drainage of my house, which somewhat seriously affected my throat. I came to London to consult my good old friend, the late Dr George Bird, of Welbeck Street. It was in Bird's house that Sir Richard Burton and his newly wedded wife, for whom he had waited ten years, had their wedding breakfast. Bird knew

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everybody, and everybody loved him. He strongly advised me to leave Geneva immediately and live at the seaside for a time. My difficulty was to get the lease of my house cancelled. The owner, a woman, refused to do it, and I brought an action against her. Unfortunately, I lost it on a point of law, and it cost me a lot of money.

Returning to England, I temporarily took up my abode in Deal, but had only been there a short time when another curious thing happened. It must, however, be dealt with in another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

How my life has been influenced by sudden and unexpected incidents—
I accept an engagement in Dundee—Amusing experiences in Ireland during the time I was gathering material for a life of Richard Pigott—I take to lecturing—A cautious Scotsman prays for me—A temperance address, and how it affected me—The mysterious tragedy of Archibald MacNeil—I leave Dundee—My generous employers—I go to Canada—Lecture at the Imperial Institute—I raise a storm, and fight a newspaper war—It all ends in smoke—An experience in Plymouth—A little comedy.

IN the course of this narrative I have dealt with some emphasis on the fact that my life has to a certain extent—indeed, I would say to a large extent—been influenced and governed by sudden and unexpected incidents. I quite expected that Deal would be my home for a year or two. Anyway, I had rented a house on an agreement for three years, and settled down to some important work I had on hand. But while I planned one way, my Fate planned another. I must premise what follows by saying that for a long time I had been a contributor to *The Dundee Weekly News*, then owned by Mr Charles Alexander, with whom I had the most pleasant relations. On the death of that gentleman *The News* and *The Daily Courier* were purchased by the late Mr William Thomson, of the firm of Thomson & Sons, ship-owners, of Dundee. One of the sons, Mr C. D. Thomson, I already knew, as he had been to Switzer-

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land during my sojourn there, and had called upon me. From him I received an invitation, soon after I had taken up my abode in Deal, to visit him in Dundee. I accepted the invitation, and was the guest of his father, with whom he and his brother Frederick were living, in a beautiful house on the south side of the Tay. On the second or third evening of my stay, while sitting with these gentlemen enjoying our cigars after an excellent dinner, Mr Thomson, senior, told me that he and his sons were desirous that I should join their staff, and take up my residence at once in Dundee. I was a little bit staggered by this totally unlooked-for proposition, and reminded my excellent host that I had only just dropped anchor in Deal, and a shift from there at that time would not only put me to considerable inconvenience, but would necessarily involve me in expense. My host said those were mere details, which could be quite easily arranged. I urged the suddenness of the offer, and asked for time to consider it. He, on his part, urged that there was no time like the present, and that delays were dangerous.

I was fully conscious of the compliment Mr Thomson and his clever sons were paying me in wishing to secure my services; for I knew they were wealthy, energetic, and shrewd, and were bent on developing and expanding their newspaper business; nevertheless, on my side there were certain private and domestic considerations which weighed with me, and seemed from my point of view to present obstacles not easily overcome, and this notwithstanding that I was quite

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habituated to sudden changes, and was ever ready to start on a journey at the word of command, with no more luggage than a pipe and a tooth-brush. In this particular instance, however, my position was subject to circumstances which I had to take into calculation. I argued the point with my worthy host, who met me with the assurance that my position in Dundee should be, as far as he and his sons could make it so, a comfortable and remunerative one.

The result of that night's conference was that the following day, in the Messrs Thomson's shipping offices, I signed a three years' engagement, and stipulated to remove to Dundee at once. I parted from my hospitable hosts for the time being, and wended my way south, breaking the journey in the border country, through which I made a tour, and gathered material for a future historical work, which was subsequently published by Messrs Chatto & Windus. In the course of a month I found myself a resident of Dundee. That is nearly twenty years ago, and my friendly relations with the Messrs Thomson continue to the present day. However, this is somewhat anticipating.

There is one incident associated with my Dundee experiences which I think I may venture to refer to. The Parnell Commission was sitting to inquire into the charges brought by *The Times* against Parnell; and to say that the excitement in Great Britain was tremendous is hardly an exaggeration. Indeed, the whole of the strange drama in which Parnell figured so conspicuously was sensational, bordering on the

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melodramatic. During that now historical inquiry the notorious Richard Pigott had been under examination, until realising the hopelessness of his position, his courage and resourcefulness forsook him, and he fled. Then a little later the news was flashed from Spain that the hunted fugitive had blown his brains out in Madrid in the presence of those sent to capture him. I was in the editorial room of our daily paper one night, when the telegraph instrument clicked out the startling information. I immediately suggested to Mr David Thomson, the then managing partner of the firm, that we should have a series of articles in the weekly paper dealing with Pigott's life, and embodying every scrap of information that could be got hold of in connection with the career of this truly remarkable man.

"But we have no material," said Mr Thomson.

"We must get it," I replied.

"How?"

"Somebody will have to go to Dublin."

"Who?"

"I will go."

"Good. Start at once."

"I shall want a considerable sum of money, because—well, because *some* of the information required may have to be bought."

"Draw whatever money you want from the cashier," were the final instructions.

In a few hours I was on my way to dear, dirty Dublin, my pipe and tooth-brush as luggage, and a bag full of golden coin of the realm by way of an

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open sesame, should it be needed. I was no stranger to Dublin. I had often visited the city, and had warm friends there. With no particular concern I learned on arrival that stringent Government orders had been issued that under no circumstances were particulars relating to Pigott to be given to the Press. The house he had occupied at Bray was in the hands of the police, while in official quarters official lips were bound hard and fast with extra-strong red tape. However, I wasn't disheartened, although there was a mountain of obstacles in my way. I couldn't climb over it, I couldn't go round it; I therefore determined to mine through it. I must be wary in detailing the processes adopted during the mining operations, but I have a recollection of creeping through a keyhole of the closely guarded house at Bray, and subsequently of my playing the host to a distinguished party of gentlemen at a small hotel, where a *recherché* supper was enjoyed. And what a supper it was! My guests were epicures. The oysters were Dublin's very best, and Dublin knows how to rear oysters. The champagne was pronounced a superb brand, in the pink of condition. The coffee and liqueurs were a gastronomic treat. And the cigars! Ah, those cigars! They were dreams! Then occurred a little dramatic episode. The neighbouring clocks were solemnly tolling midnight, when all present entered into a compact. It would have made a most effective scene on the stage.

In the grey light of a quiet dawn, for sleep still held the city, I stood on the steps of the hotel enjoying the

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morning air, musing on the strangeness of human affairs, and thinking how a man dead might, under certain circumstances, be worth more than a man living. Why there should have been so much mystery and secrecy about Pigott's affairs I am utterly at a loss to understand even at this distance of time. But the Government official mind is not as other minds; besides, what is Government red tape for if not to gag men's mouths? That is all right as far as it goes; in the arch-rebel Pigott's case, however, there did not seem any reason for secrecy excepting in so far as his papers were concerned, for it was believed, and subsequently proved to be the case, those papers threw a good deal of light on the dark ways of the Fenians. But I didn't want his private papers; what I did want were certain facts and particulars concerning his career; these were not to be got in a straightforward way, for the Government had said it. Nevertheless, I did get information, and a lot of it. Of course, I was regaled with many wild stories, and I had to sift a tremendous amount of chaff before I came across a grain of wheat. Pigott was a scoundrel, a deeply dyed scoundrel, but a singularly interesting one. He was clever, too, and was able for a number of years to lead a double life, which deceived everyone, even those who were most intimate with him. And as the world now knows, he deceived *The Times*, in spite of all the cleverness and intellect of the conductors of that journal. How *The Times* came to be gulled by so shallow a rascal the world does not know, and probably never will. Printing House Square jealously

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guards its own secrets, as the Government guard theirs. *The Times* people believed they had scored, backed their opinion heavily, and, of course, lost.

A little incident which occurred during my stay in Dublin is too amusing to be passed over. I had occasion to call in the neighbourhood of the Castle several times, and at last I became aware that I was an object of interest to two gentlemen whose duty it was to keep their eyes open. An astrakhan fur-trimmed coat and a soft felt hat (a weakness of mine) that I wore, had drawn the attention of those gentlemen to my humble self, though why that particular style of costume should have subjected me to the attention of Government spies I could never make out. If I had wanted to blow up the Castle, murder the Lord-Lieutenant, or raise an Irish army for the invasion of England, it is hardly likely I should have made myself conspicuous by certain articles of clothing, nor should I have paid frequent visits to the Castle in broad daylight. But as an Irish friend of mine put it, "The ways of thim detictives are fearful and wonderful, begorra!" But there was an epidemic of Fenian on the brain, and those two gentlemen who honoured me with their attention had it badly. One morning, as I got on to my jaunting car, they mounted a car also, and prepared to follow me. "Who are those fellows?" I asked my jarvey.

"Detictives, my lord." I had hired the jarvey for many days running, and he insisted on addressing me as "My lord." He had an eye to tips.

"Why are they following me?" I asked.

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"They think yer a Fanian, my lord."

"Oh! Can your horse travel fast, Pat?"

"Begorra, my lord, he's the wonderfulest horse in Dublin. When he has a mane person behind him divel a bit will he go. But he knows yer a lord; and he's a thought reader too, yer honour. If it were in yer moind that yer lordship intinded to give me foive shillings, he'd know it at once, and, yer honour, there wouldn't be a baste in Dublin that could bate him."

"Well, Pat," I answered, "it is in my mind, and I want to give those gentlemen a run for their money. Get into Phœnix Park, then go like —— Well, go; but go anywhere, and keep going, you understand."

That wonderful horse rose to the occasion; by the aid of plenty of whipcord and sturdy, stimulating Irish oaths, he went, and the fun began. A Roman chariot race wouldn't have been in it. We flashed up one road and down another of the park. We swung round corners on one wheel, and my two friends were ever behind us. On we flew, on they came. It was splendid. It filled one with the elixir of life; but at last my steed, in spite of plenty of whipcord and oaths, and the promise of another five shillings, showed signs of faltering. "To the Red House" (a renowned hostelry), I commanded. To the Red House we sped. Arrived, I sprang down, rushed to the bar, and ordered some oysters and stout. In a few minutes in rushed my panting followers. "We want your name and address, sor," demanded one fiercely.

"With pleasure, my friend." And I handed him my

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card, bearing the name of my papers. "We've had a pleasant drive. Will you join me in oysters and stout?"

The two gentlemen looked a little crestfallen. "You newspaper men are divils," murmured the speaker. Then he added pathetically: "Begorra, sor, we tuk yer for a Fenian." I managed to convince the worthy watch-dog that I was not a Fenian, not even in sympathy with the aims and objects of Fenianism; so we spent a pleasant hour together, and found the stout and oysters good.

A week or so later I was back in Dundee, and thereafter for sixteen or seventeen weeks appeared in *The Weekly News* a circumstantial narrative of Richard Pigott's life, and the circulation of the journal bounded upward. A year or two ago those articles were collated and published by Mr John Long under the title of "The Crime of the Century," with much additional matter which I had been able to secure in the interval. During my engagement in Dundee I made a tour through Norway, and contributed a number of descriptive articles to *The Daily Courier*. Subsequently I got up a lantern lecture on Norway, and delivered it in many parts of Scotland. There is a funny little anecdote in connection with this period which is also worth telling. I was engaged to appear at an institute in a very small town four miles from the nearest railway station. My chairman for the evening was a local gentleman who kept the only grocer's shop in the village. In introducing me he referred to me as "this mon wha's come here tae

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broaden oor intellects." In speaking of his own experiences as a traveller, he confessed that they had not been extensive, though they had embraced "Aberdeen awa," as well as Edinboro', and "Glasgae," but "this mon has been all over the world;" then with the Scottish caution, which is such an admirable trait, he added: "At least *he* tells us so." And the trait I have alluded to being exceedingly strong within him, he invoked divine aid by saying that "a wee bit prayer" would not be out of place. Folding his fat hands in front of him, and throwing back his bald head until the bristly hairs of his very red moustache stood out like the quills of a fretful porcupine, he shut his eyes, and offered up a very telling supplication, which lasted for fully five minutes. It seemed to me to be an hour. He wound up with this peroration, which was like the inspiration of genius:

"And oh, Lord, pit it intae the heart o' this mon tae speak the truth, the hale truth, and naething but the truth, and gie us grace to underston' him."

That pious grocer was evidently dubious about travellers' tales; and I am afraid I failed to satisfy him, in spite of his soul-moving appeal on my behalf, for when proposing a vote of thanks at a later period he said "that while the 'Lectur' was exceedingly interesting, he didn't think Mr Muddock had been quite free from exaggeration. For instance, he says there are fields of ice in Norroway forty miles and mair long. Weel, me friends, I could swallow doon they fields o' ice, but when he tells us that they Norwegians dinna ken Scotch whisky, I'll no believe him. It

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isna possible that any people ca'ing themselves cee-veelised can be sae benighted as to be ignorant o' Scotch whisky."

As I couldn't get away from the village that night, I was the worthy grocer's guest. He made me sample some excellent Scotch, and promised that should I be visiting "Norroway" again, he would entrust me with a few cases for distribution amongst the natives, so that they might no longer remain in ignorance of the blessed "Mountain Dew." I have been to Norway since, but as I felt there might be difficulties in the way, under the Norwegian laws, of my taking advantage of my friend's generous offer, I did not trouble him, and the Norwegians remain benighted to this day.

When my three years' engagement with the Messrs Thomson expired, it was renewed for another three years; but at the end of the fourth year I was weary of Dundee, and after some negotiations my employers most generously allowed me to reside in London. Soon afterwards the fever of *Wanderlust* burned in my veins once more, and it led to a little friction between me and Messrs Thomson, but I was entirely to blame. I informed them I was going to make a tour through Canada. They very properly objected; but the more they objected, the more I insisted, and with the headstrong determination which on more than one occasion, I am afraid, has caused me to run my head against a brick wall, I went to Canada.

Looking at that little episode from this point of time, I cannot sufficiently express my sense of ap-

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preciation of the handsome manner with which Messrs Thomson treated me. They had good grounds for an action for breach of contract; most certainly they would have been within their rights had they cancelled the agreement; but with the magnificent generosity which I have always experienced at their hands, they did not even do that, and for many years afterwards I continued to write for them. It affords me very great pleasure to make this amende honourable to a firm of gentlemen to whom I am indebted for so much kindness.

It was about this time that the Savage Club was greatly perturbed by a strange tragedy. A prominent member with whom I was well acquainted, Mr Archibald MacNeil, came to a strange and terrible end. MacNeil was on the staff of *The Sportsman*, and was sent to France by his editor to report an event of great interest to the sporting world. He put up at the Hotel de l'Athennee in Paris. When his duties were fulfilled, and he was about to leave, he tried to get a bank-note for £50 changed, but did not succeed, and he left Paris by a train for England, following that which had conveyed some of his colleagues, who had been in France on the same errand as himself. He reached Boulogne in time for the steamer which was to convey his friends across the Channel. When he got on board he suddenly remembered that he had left a valuable walking-stick in the waiting-room, and ran back to get it. From that moment the mystery began, and all trace of him was lost. He came not back, and the steamer went without him. It was

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thought, of course, by his friends that he would return by the next boat ; but he did not, and some uneasiness was felt. Inquiries were, made without result. Archibald MacNeil had mysteriously disappeared. About a week later, however, his body was found on the sands of Boulogne a mile or two from the harbour. There were several wounds on the head, each wound having a strange resemblance to the other. Inquiry revealed the fact that he had been seen on the day of his disappearance in the company of a professional guide, whose name was Vermische. They were observed in a little café near the Fish Market. This man was arrested, but subsequently discharged for the want of evidence. On the dead body there was nothing of value, though MacNeil was known to have been in possession of £30 in gold, several notes for £10 each, and one for £20. This was in addition to the £50 note he had tried to change in Paris. Curiously enough, that particular note was never heard of more, but the others were forwarded to the police, accompanied by an ill-spelt letter, which declared that the writer had found them on the sea-shore. They had apparently been soaked with sea water, but the police submitted them to analysis by an expert, who failed to detect any iodine, and who proved that the water which had stained them was fresh water, in which common salt had been dissolved. Two English ladies staying near Boulogne stated that on the night of MacNeil's disappearance they heard cries of "Help, murder!" coming from the direction where two officials were on duty on the shore.

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Subsequently a statement was made to the police by a person, who having quarrelled with a comrade, denounced him as the criminal. The informer's version was the victim was enticed from the town to the seashore, where he was assaulted, robbed, and thrown into the sea. Nothing, however, seems to have resulted from this confession. Possibly investigation proved it to be not true. The doctor who made the autopsy averred that when the unfortunate man was cast into the sea he was undoubtedly alive. My friend, the late Henry Herman, the well-known dramatic author, spent much time and money in trying to unravel the mystery. He pursued the two suspected douaniers, and one of them, who was known to have changed English gold for French silver, became so alarmed that he took to his bed, and died. For some unaccountable reason that I wot not of, the authorities refused to arrest the suspected man, and to this day the mystery remains unsolved.

MacNeil was a very able and popular journalist, and his sad end caused great sorrow to a wide circle of friends.

To come back to myself, after I returned from Canada, where I had a delightful time, particularly in the Rockies, I took up lecturing professionally, and it fell in my way to deliver an address on Canada at the Imperial Institue. In the course of that address I considered, rightly or wrongly, that I was justified in criticising somewhat severely the management, and particularly the promotion, of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It has been my habit all my life—not a wise

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habit, I admit, but an honest one—to speak out bluntly what I believe to be true. I spoke out bluntly on that occasion, with the result that an ill-advised gentleman who represented the Company in London went for me the following day in a letter to *The Times*. It necessitated, of course, a reply from me, for a gross misstatement was made. Then practically the whole of the London Press threw themselves into the fray, and for some weeks there was a very pretty wordy war, and two or three of the subsidised reptile journals of Canada dipped their pens in the foulest of garbage, and bespattered me. However, it did not turn my hair grey nor deprive me of a single night's rest. And I was gratified by the enormous number of letters that reached me, generally of a highly complimentary character. At last the enemy resorted to rather a mean subterfuge to defeat me by getting Lord Herschell to write to *The Times*, which up to that moment had afforded me the hospitality of its columns. It closed the correspondence, so the little hubbub frizzled out. But I claim here, as I claimed then, that not a single fact I had stated was disproved. Opposed to me, however, were the powers of an enormous railway company and of a number of men of wealth and position. Nevertheless, I said my say.

With the exception of the foregoing incident, my lecture experiences were pleasant enough, and often very amusing. On one occasion I was engaged for a Mechanics' Institute a few miles from Birmingham. The village was a dreadfully primitive place, and the Institute, which was no less primitive, was mainly

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supported by a Birmingham manufacturer. This gentleman, who was small of stature, and painfully thin, had yellow hair and a yellow moustache and yellow eyebrows. His eyes were whitey brown and his voice a decided squeak. He was altogether a remarkable gentleman, with a wonderful amount of energy and activity of body. He had many pet aversions; the chiefest perhaps was drink. The subject was one over which he thrilled, raved, and foamed. If he had had the making of the laws, he would have condemned every man or woman who touched alcohol in any shape or form, to instant death, without the benefit of spiritual consolation. When I reached the station, the darkness of which was made visible by four petroleum lamps with smoke-grimed glasses, it was raining. Well, that is a mild way of putting it: it seemed as if the heavens had burst. I asked for a cab. I was laughed at. There were no cabs there. How far was the Institute? A good mile. And so making the best of it, I set off to tramp that "good mile." I called it something else than good before I got to the end of it. I carried three boxes of slides, which aggregated about 30 lbs. when I started, but they increased in weight every yard, and weighed three cwt. before I had finished. And then the rain! Well, the flood! I was in evening dress, and wearing light shoes. When I reached the Institute I was like a draggled scarecrow. I found that the platform consisted of some planks on orange boxes. The gentleman from Birmingham, he of the yellow hair, who was my chairman for the night, was waiting

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anxiously for me ; the small hall was quite packed with the mechanics and their womenfolk, and the atmosphere was heavy with the smell of corduroy and damp leather. The chairman introduced me, then he addressed the audience on the "Curse of drink," and went mad. He danced with rage on the springy platform, and, of course, the spring boards jerked me up and down like a dancing doll. My wet shoes were pulp, and the rain dripped from my sodden garments; still that little yellow-haired man squeaked and danced, and banged his little fist on his palm by way of hammering home his arguments. For fifteen minutes by the clock he foamed. I shouldn't have lived through it but for a flask I carried in my breast pocket. That flask contained some magnificent old cognac I had brought from my own house, and every now and again, in the shadow of the screen, I appealed to the flask to comfort and sustain me through all my afflictions. At last the little man stopped from sheer exhaustion, and I began. My lecture over, I had to stand on one side to let the mechanics out, as the only exit door was at the platform end. When the room was nearly empty a huge fellow approached me, and whispered in my ear :

"I say, guvnor, president's address didn't mak' much impression on thee. I saw thee sooping."

I turned an appealing look upon him, hoping he would not annihilate me where I stood, and meekly whined :—

"My friend, if you had been sodden to the skin, and cold and miserable, as I was, I am afraid you would

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have supped had the chance presented itself. But spare me. Give me a little time to repent. Besides, I am an orphan."

He grasped the lapel of my coat lovingly, and whispered :—

"It's a' reet, guvnor. But look 'ere, hast ta gotten a drop left i' t' flask?"

I breathed once more, and in a weak moment handed him the flask. He unscrewed the metal top, gave me a look which meant much, and I heard my old cognac gurgle down his throat like water down a pipe. As he drew his dirty hand across his lips, dashed the tears from his eyes with his knuckles, he handed me back the empty flask, with the remark, as soon as he could recover his breath :

"Sithee, guvnor, thee tak my advice, lad. Don't thee soop ; it'll bring thee to damnation if tha does."

I plodded my way to the station through the flooded streets a sadder and a wiser man. Before I reached Birmingham—seven miles, with a station every mile, at which the jolting train stopped five minutes each time—I was a sadder and a madder man. The empty flask seemed to come out of my pocket, and dance a fandango in the air, while a squeaky voice screamed in my ear : "You fool, you fool, you fool." However, I survived that little adventure as I had survived many others.

I had another rather curious experience at Plymouth, where I had been lecturing. I had engaged a room at a hotel for the night, and my business being over, I was about to leave the hall, when was I ac-

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costed by a liveried servant, who touching his hat asked me if I was Mr Muddock. I said I believed I was, though it didn't do to be too cocksure about anything. He said that if I was the person he wanted, he had orders to drive me to his master's house in the carriage.

"Who is your master?" I inquired.

"I arn't to tell you, sir."

"Hello," I thought, "here's a pretty little mystery." And as I liked mystery, I asked no further questions, and was content to wait for developments. I followed the servant to a most luxuriously appointed brougham to which were harnessed a pair of magnificent horses. I entered that carriage with all the dignity of a prime minister, and sank down on the splendid cushions with a sigh of gratification. It was a bitterly cold night, and I was grateful for the costly footwarmer, which diffused a genial heat through the carriage. I hadn't the remotest idea where I was being driven to, nor did I care. Perhaps I was being kidnapped! Perhaps some gentleman who had a grievance against me was having me conveyed to his house, where he would challenge me to a duel to the death; or some dear old lady in possession of a million or so was going to make me her heir for the love of the thing. I had read of such things in fairy tales. Anyway, I was not greatly concerned. I found the carriage grateful and comforting. Half-an-hour passed. We stopped. The door was thrown open. I alighted. Before me was a flight of steps, on the top of which stood a footman in livery, brought into relief by a brilliantly lighted hall. I ascended the steps, entered the hall, was relieved of

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my fur coat, and ushered into a superbly furnished drawing-room. A cheerful fire burned in the polished steel grate; a soft, rose-coloured light from shaded lamps was diffused through the apartment. "This is nice," I thought, as I stood on the massive bear-skin rug, with my back to the fire, waiting for the next act. In a few minutes the door opened, and a charming lady, elegantly attired, hurried forward with outstretched hands, and exclaimed:

"I am *so* glad to see you. How *are* you, Mr Muddock?"

I began to fancy that I was the victim of some strange delusion. I stammered out an apology. "Oh, you horrid man," she cried, "not to remember me!" I confessed my sin, and prayed her to deal leniently with me. "I wonder if you will know Philip," she mused.

I begged of her to tell me her name. "I won't, you nasty, horrid creature, until you have seen Philip," she answered, her beautiful face radiant with smiles.

Then Philip, a somewhat ponderous, gouty, middle-aged, florid-faced gentleman, hobbled into the room, and he too put out both hands, and welcomed me effusively. I didn't know him. "Whatever do you think, Philip," said the lady to her husband, "this horrid man pretends he doesn't know me. Really, it's too bad. I suppose he thinks humble folk like us are not worth remembering."

"Then we'll punish him," answered the husband gravely.

"Sir," addressing me, "you shall be permitted to

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sup before execution. Give your arm to that lady and conduct her to the supper-room."

"I bow to your commands, sir," I said. "No more delightful way of meeting one's end could be imagined."

We made our way to a splendid dining-room, where the well-spread table, resplendent with silver, glass, fruit, flowers, was like a fairy scene. Two sweet young girls—one sixteen, the other about eighteen—were introduced to me as "My daughters Eunice and Gladys." They were cautioned not to mention their family name. Next an exceedingly pretty girl, with a most intellectual face, the governess, was introduced as Miss Jones.

"Put off the execution as long as you can," I pleaded earnestly to my host as he took his seat at one end of the table and ordered me to sit on the right-hand side of his beautiful wife. "I'm not tired of this kind of life yet," I added. "On my honour, I can endure a lot more of it."

And so throughout the whole of the supper-time I sat there in absolute ignorance of the identity of my entertainers. And what a supper it was! Every delicacy of the season almost, with the wines of the best. It was only when the cigars were introduced that my genial host enlightened me.

Something like twenty years before that night I was staying at Zermatt in Switzerland. In the same hotel were a newly-married couple—a mere boy and girl, the girl sweetly pretty. I struck up a casual acquaintance with them. A few days later I was pre-

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paring to start on a little glacier expedition with a friend and his sister, when the newly-married husband, who had sprained his foot, asked me if I would mind his wife going with us, as she was most anxious to make a glacier trip. Need I say I readily consented, and the four of us started off, accompanied by a porter. It was a glorious day, and when we reached the head of the glacier we were tempted to climb some rocks to a plateau, where we partook of luncheon and spent two or three hours. In going down the rocks to the glacier again, the young married lady was suddenly seized with a giddiness and faintness. I caught her with one arm as she fell, and kept my position by clinging like grim death with the finger-ends of my left hand to a projecting piece of rock. My friends and the porter had gone on, and were out of sight. It was rather a trying moment for me. If I had slipped, my companion must have been dashed to pieces. However, I didn't slip; I managed to get her down, and thankful indeed I was when we reached the level glacier; but all the way back to Zermatt she was very ill, and it was as much as I could do to keep her going. Of course, she told her husband of what had occurred; he overwhelmed me with thanks, and invited me to visit them in Bristol, if ever I was that way, where at that time he was in business.

I parted from them at Zermatt, and never heard of them nor saw them again until that night when I lectured in Plymouth, where they had been living for some years. Naturally, they had passed

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clean out of my memory. They had heard of my coming to the town, and wishing to give me a little surprise, had sent their carriage for me, instructing the servants not to mention their master's name, as they thought it quite probable that I might not recognise them after such a lapse of time and such a chance acquaintance ; particularly as I was not likely to know they had removed from Bristol. They decided I should be kept in ignorance until after the supper. It was a delightful little comedy, but two or three years afterwards I happened to be in Plymouth again, and called on my friends, to be shocked by the information that my host of that delightful evening was no more. He had died a few months previously. His sorrowing widow was so ill that she could not see me, and before that year was out she too was dead.

I have visited Plymouth several times since, but the place has always impressed me with a sense of sadness, and I have been glad to turn my back upon it, in spite of its beauty and charm. For how could I forget the delightful and the warm-hearted people who entertained me so royally and who seemed blessed with all that tends to make life enjoyable—wealth, position, sweet children ; nevertheless, while still young, they had been claimed by Death, yet I, the weather-worn and battered man, had been spared.

CHAPTER IX

An interview with Mr (now Sir) George Newnes—How "For God and the Czar" came to be written—Death of my friend, Byron Reed, M.P. Pathetic incidents—How a copyright of mine was infringed—Curious history of one of my books—A lawsuit—Remarkable point of law in connection with the Copyright Act settled—Mr Justice Kekewich awards me damages—I edit the third volume of the "Savage Club Papers."

ONE day about the period I have now arrived at, I had occasion to call on my good friend, Mr Galloway Fraser, who had recently been appointed to the editorial room of *Tit Bits*. He and I were "acquaint" in bonnie Scotland, and we had some things to talk about. In the course of the interview he informed me that a big price had been paid for a serial that wasn't "catching on," and he added the query: "I wonder if you could do anything for us?" I expressed an opinion that it came within measurable distance of possibility that I might. Whereupon I was asked to see Mr (as he then was) Newnes, and there and then was introduced to that gentleman in a room of the well-known corner building in Catherine Street. Mr Newnes didn't waste much time in preliminaries. He wanted a topical story. Had I any idea of a subject? I had. What? The persecutions of the Jews in Russia. The very thing. And the title? "For God and the Czar." Splendid! When could I let him have the copy? In six months. "Great

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Scott! I want it in a fortnight." "Impossible!" I exclaimed. "Surprised to hear you say that. Go away somewhere. Shut yourself up where letters do not come and the postman is at rest. I will announce the story in a fortnight, and begin it a fortnight later."

"I will go," said I.

"Good. Will you pardon me now? I am rather busy. Oh, by the way, what shall I fix the fee at?" I named a figure.

"It's big, isn't it?"

"It's the figure I must have, Mr Newnes."

"Right. I never haggle about the price of literature. Good-bye."

In a fortnight "For God and the Czar" was announced. A fortnight later it began. I kept it running for months. It sent the circulation of the paper up like a rocket, and it has stuck up in the literary firmament, very high, ever since. It is still edited by my friend Fraser.

In book form "For God and the Czar" has run into goodness knows how many editions. It reached the heart of the Jewish world. It brought me letters from all parts, in all languages. The opening chapter of it was included in a book on literature and art, consisting of extracts from standard and well-known authors, published by J. S. Virtue & Co., and edited by E. Brayley Hodgetts, who spent many years of his life in Russia. It was translated into Yiddish. It was banned in Russia. Recently it has been issued in Japanese.

Pages from an Adventurous Life

I wrote another work for Mr Newnes, "The Life of Vidocq," now published by Hutchinson & Co., and I was among the early contributors to *The Strand Magazine*.

The year 1896 was saddened for me by the untimely death of my friend, H. Byron Reed, M.P. for East Bradford. I was very warmly attached to Reed. During September of that year he and his family had been living at St Lawrence, near Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, where they had taken a furnished house for the season. The week before his death I had been staying with him, and Mrs Reed had drawn my attention to a pony which had been left by the owners of the house for the use of the temporary tenants. She informed me that her husband had driven the pony two or three times, but had nearly come to grief, as the animal was an exceedingly vicious one. The following day we had arranged a picnic to Black Gang Chine. As Mrs Reed protested against her husband going in the trap, I undertook to drive the pony, and a fellow-guest, a clergyman, agreed to accompany me. All went well for a time, but when near the Chine the pony displayed his temper, and we had a struggle. On the return journey no one would accompany me, and though the pony and I had some differences of opinion, I prevailed in the end. On arrival at the house Mr Reed's son was standing at the door with a camera, and obtained a snapshot which, I here reproduce. Subsequently I urged my friend Reed not to attempt to drive the pony, as he was a nervous man, and, moreover, had had no experience with



THE ALTRON IN THE TRAP, WITH THE PONY THAT CAUSED THE DEATH OF
HENRY BAYSON REED, M.P.

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horses. He promised me that he would not do so, unless the boy who had been left in charge was with him. The following week I met Mr Reed in London. He was on his way to Bradford to address his constituents. He returned on the Friday night, and on Saturday I saw him off to the Isle of Wight, and promised to visit him again in the course of a few days. On the Monday I was walking along Cannon Street with a friend, when I saw on an evening paper poster an announcement of Byron Reed's death. The shock to me was terrible. It appeared that when Mr Reed arrived at Ventnor by the 3.30 train he was met at the station by the boy with the pony and trap. Reed took the reins, and all went well for some time, when suddenly the pony swerved, and ran into a gateway. Reed managed to get him in hand, and turned him round, but somehow or another the trap overturned, throwing both the occupants out. My friend alighted on his head, though after a time he partially recovered, and was able to walk to his home. He was fairly well on Sunday, but was seized with convulsions on Monday early, and died at 6.30. Mr Reed was an exceedingly gifted man, with every promise of a brilliant career before him in the world of politics. He was a most fluent speaker, a plucky fighter, a loyal and big-hearted friend. Curiously enough I had dedicated a book, called "Without Faith or Fear," to him, and the last sheets were being printed on the very day of his death. I was, however, in time to add a few appreciative lines, as follows :—

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IN MEMORIAM

In infinite sorrow and pity this work is now inscribed to the memory of my dear friend, Henry Byron Reed, who, as the book was on the eve of going to press, suddenly lost his life in the Isle of Wight through a carriage accident. I still felt the pressure of his honest heart handshake when the news of his death reached me. Money can buy many things, good and evil, but all the wealth of the world cannot buy you a friend nor pay you for the loss of one.

Mr Reed, who had but recently returned from a tour in South Africa, was a nephew of Sir Edward Reed, and only in his forty-first year when he met with the fatal accident, which I have recorded in the foregoing lines.

In another part of this work I refer to a youthful production of mine which I named "A Wingless Angel," a specially bound copy of which was accepted by her late Majesty Queen Victoria. The history of that book is so very curious that I propose to tell it.

Originally issued by Virtue & Co. at half-a-guinea, the copyright was presented to me when that firm was reorganised and they ceased to publish novels. I then granted Mr Arthur H. Moxon, of 21 Paternoster Row, publishing rights with a time limit, and he included it in "Moxon's Popular Novels." But he failed in business, and I never received any payment. Then an unauthorised edition by some obscure firm was published, and I had to threaten the people with an action. They went into the Bankruptcy Court. A long time after that it came to my knowledge that another unauthorised edition, priced at

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2s. 6d., was being issued by James Blackwood, otherwise Blackwood & Co., of Lovell's Court, Paternoster Row. Failing to get an answer to several letters I addressed to Mr Blackwood, I put the matter in the hands of my solicitor; whereupon Mr Blackwood called upon me at my house, and offered to settle the matter for £10. I declined. He then became defiant, and left me no alternative but to appeal to a legal tribunal. After the usual heart-breaking law's delay—in this instance nearly two years—the case came on for hearing before Judge Kekewich, and as it settled rather a curious point of law of great interest to authors generally, I give here the verbatim report which appeared in *The Times* for Wednesday, the 17th of November 1897, as it may be instructive and useful in future years. Anyhow, it will show writers what quicksands they tread upon when they entrust their interests to courts of law.

(BEFORE MR JUSTICE KEKEWICH)

MUDDOCK *v.* BLACKWOOD

This was a copyright case of some importance. Two copyright actions had been brought, one having been commenced in the Chancery Division, and the other in the Queen's Bench Division, but they had since been consolidated by an order in the Chancery action. The writ in the Chancery action was issued on 24th November 1896 by the plaintiff, Mr J. E. Muddock, the author of and the registered proprietor of the copyright in a work called "A Wingless Angel,"

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against Mr James Blackwood, a publisher, and a firm of publishers called J. Blackwood & Co., claiming an injunction, an account of profits, and delivery up of copies in respect of a work published by the defendants and under the same title, and being, in fact, a reprint of the plaintiff's work. On 10th December the principal defendant, Mr James Blackwood, wrote to the plaintiff, offering to submit to an injunction, to pay £10 as damages, to deliver up all copies in his hands, and to pay the plaintiff's costs as between party and party.¹ The plaintiff, however, refused the offer, and on 18th December made a demand in writing on the defendants under Section 23 of the Copyright Act 1842 (5 & 6 Vict. c. 45) for all copies of the book unlawfully printed or imported, and then on 23rd December 1896 issued the writ in the Queen's Bench action, claiming damages for wrongful conversion of copies of the book unlawfully printed without the consent of the plaintiff. Then he delivered a statement of claim in the action, and on 1st February 1897 obtained an order in Chambers in that action transferring it to the Chancery Division, but expressly reserving the costs of the action to be dealt with by the Chancery Judge at the trial. On 8th February Mr Justice Kekewich, on the plaintiff's application, made an order that the two actions should be consolidated and proceed as one action; and in the consolidated action the plaintiff delivered a statement of claim, claiming an injunction, delivery up of all copies in the defendants' possession, an

¹ He had previously called on me, and offered me £10.

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account of profits made by the defendants by the infringement, or alternative damages in respect of the infringement, with an inquiry as to the amount thereof, £250 damages for conversion as in an action of trover, and costs. It appeared the plaintiff had not published any copies of his work since 1875; that in 1886 the defendant, Mr James Blackwood, bought the stereotyped plates of the work at an auction sale at Messrs Puttick & Simpson's of Leicester Square, and had used them without demur until last year.¹ An account furnished by the defendants showed that in 1886 he sold 1010 copies at a total price of £38, 19s. 9½d., and at a profit of £8, 10s. 4½d.; also in 1898 he sold 25 copies, at a profit of £1, 4s. 2d., his total profits thus amounting to £9, 14s. 6½d.; also that after taking into account the purchase of the plates and repairs, amounting altogether to £10, there had been a net loss on production and sale of the books of 5s. 5½d.² Mr Warrington, Q.C., and Mr J. C. Joseph, for the plaintiff, relied on Section 23 of the Copyright Act 1842, 5 and 6 Vict. c. 45. (Scrutton on Copyright, p. 246), which provides that all copies of any book wherein there shall be copyright, and of which entry shall have been unlawfully printed or imported or exported without the consent of the registered proprietor of such copyright, in writing

¹ I did not know that the book was being published until 1896. How then could I demur? Apparently the book was not sold in England, and was only advertised in defendants' trade catalogue.

² On the copies in circulation it was announced that it was the "Fourth Thousand." It will be noted that according to the defendants' account he had sold no copies between 1886 and 1896.

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under his hand first obtained, shall be deemed to be the property of the proprietor of such copyright, and who shall be registered as such. And such registered proprietor shall, after demand thereof in writing, be entitled to sue for and recover the same, or damages for the detention thereof, in an action of detinue, from any party who shall detain the same, or to sue for and recover damages for the conversion thereof in an action of trover. Mr Renshaw, Q.C., and Mr J. W. Baines, for the defendant Blackwood, referred to Section 15, which enacts that if any person shall in any part of the British dominions, after the passing of this Act, print or cause to be printed, either for sale or exportation, any book in which there shall be subsisting copyright, without the consent in writing of the proprietor thereof, or shall import for sale or hire any such book, knowing such book to have been unlawfully printed from parts beyond the sea, or knowing such book to have been so unlawfully printed or imported, shall sell, publish, or expose, for sale or hire, or cause to be sold or published, or exposed for sale or hire, or shall have in his possession for sale or hire, any such book so unlawfully printed or imported without such consent as aforesaid, such offender shall be liable to a special action on the case at the suit of the proprietor of such copyright to be brought in any Court of Record in any part of the British dominions in which the offence shall be committed. They submitted the two sections were inconsistent, and that the plaintiff was wrong in claiming as he had done, both in detinue and in

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trover, for under Section 23 he must select the one mode of action or the other, not both. As to the alleged profits made by the defendant, when the price of the plates, and the usual trade discounts, were taken into consideration, it was clear there could be no profits. The plaintiff had resorted to a "Multiplicity of actions" when he might have sought relief by one action. The action had been, in fact, continued without any necessity, the defendant having offered all the plaintiff could justly claim.

Mr Justice Kekewich said it was somewhat strange that in the end of the year 1897 he should be called upon for the first time to say what was the meaning of Section 23 of the Act 5 and 6 Vic. c. 45—whether the remedy given by that section was inconsistent with that given by Section 15; but he supposed he was really called upon to do that because no counsel had suggested to him that there was any decision; and, moreover, the book on copyright which was in the hands of the profession, and to which reference was usually made on all questions of copyright, did not give any case on the subject. Two points had been raised. First, it was said on behalf of the defendant that Section 15 gave the proprietor of copyright a remedy by special action on the case; that meant that this was the remedy which he intended to pursue, except so far as his remedies at common law were not interfered with; that the offender under Section 23 was a different person to the offender under Section 15; that under Section 15 he was dealing with a person who had "unlawfully printed or

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imported" a book in which there was a subsisting copyright ; and that the other Section 23 provided a remedy against the accidental possessor of the infringing book, so as to give a right of action against the accidental possessor independently of his being otherwise a wrong-doer. That might be the right view, but the language of the section was not sufficiently clear to compel his Lordship to adopt it. No doubt there were words in Section 15 which were not to be found in Section 23, and he was unable to suggest why the two sections should not have been put into one, and why they should have been separated as they were. But, on the other hand, he did not see why, because the proprietor of the copyright had a remedy under Section 15 against the wrong-doer, he could not sue a wrong-doer, if so advised under Section 23. Then the next point was this, the book being vested in the proprietor of the copyright, Section 23 said he "shall, after demand in writing, be entitled to sue for and recover the same, or damages for the detention thereof, in an action of detinue, from any party who shall detain the same, or to sue for and recover damages for the conversion thereof in an action of trover." That provides an alternative remedy ; and the argument on behalf of the defendant was that the plaintiff claiming to sue under the section must elect to sue either in detinue or in trover, and could not sue in both. That was an easier point than the other. There was an alternative remedy. It would, in his Lordship's opinion, be adopting an extremely narrow construction of the Act to say that

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the proprietor of the copyright in a book knowing that a person had a certain number of copies in his hands, and he had sold other copies, could not sue that person in respect of the copies that he detained and also in respect of those that he had converted to his own use. It seemed tolerably plain upon the Act itself, and in accordance with what was the apparent intention of the Legislature, that the two actions might be reduced to one action distributed in the way he had suggested—that is to say, the plaintiff might sue in detinue in respect of the copies the defendant had detained, and might sue in trover in respect of the copies he had sold and converted to his own use. Having got so far, the plaintiff in the present case, who was the proprietor of the registered copyright in a book called “A Wingless Angel,” was entitled to sue under Section 23, and to sue the defendant notwithstanding that he might have brought what was called “A Special Action in the Case” under Section 15, and he might have exercised his privilege of bringing an action on the case by proceeding in the Chancery Division. What then was the plaintiff’s remedy? In his Lordship’s opinion he was entitled to the delivery up on oath of all books in the possession of the defendant—that is to say, delivery up, and also damages as in an action of trover for the books the defendant had sold. The defendant had sold twice. His Lordship declined to order an inquiry as to damages. It would be almost wicked to send the case to the Master or to an official referee to find damages for conversion; if necessary, he should

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have the inquiry before himself. Mr Warrington had asked him to fix a sum, and if he added forty guineas for the whole, he thought he was giving the plaintiff as much as he was entitled to. The plaintiff was also entitled to an injunction as part of the order. Upon the question of costs, his Lordship said that the plaintiff might have obtained all the relief he sought by one action in the Chancery Division. He seemed, however, to have determined to multiply costs in every possible way, and his Lordship would do his best to mark his sense of the proceeding. He should therefore give him only the costs of the Chancery action; the costs of the other proceedings he must be ordered to pay.

In my humble opinion, nothing could better illustrate the shameful defects of the copyright law in this country than the foregoing. It will be noted that the case was decided on a mildewed Act of Parliament passed fifty years before, which was so defective and ambiguous that it wanted the wisdom of a multitude of legal owls to determine what it all meant. It is also instructive as emphasising the monstrous injustice to which authors have to submit. I was told on the highest authority that there had rarely been a more flagrant case of unlawful conversion than this. In the first instance, the person or persons who allowed the stereotyped plates to be put up to auction were guilty of an illegal act, and when the defendant purchased them he must have known perfectly well that the copyright in the work was vested in somebody,

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for it had not been long enough in existence for it to have lapsed. Instead of trying to find out who the somebody was, he coolly proceeds to print from them, and for years goes on selling the work. If a man infringes a patent he is liable to be cast in heavy damages, but according to Kekewich's ruling a publisher may continue to issue a pirated edition of a book for years, and yet can only be called upon to pay a nominal sum. Obviously there is one law for the inventor and another for the author, and though the law makes a pretence of affording an author protection, it regards him really as of small importance.

Anything more illogical than Mr Justice Kekewich's remark, that if he gave the plaintiff forty guineas it was as much as he was entitled to, could not be imagined. Again, his statement that the plaintiff seemed to have determined to multiply costs in every possible way was untrue. I tried to explain to the learned Judge that I had employed a reputable firm of solicitors, and that personally I knew nothing about the law on the subject. I was promptly sat upon, and sternly told that I ought to have made myself acquainted with the law. Could anything be more ridiculous? The laws are made by lawyers for the benefit of lawyers, and the layman hasn't a ghost of a chance. If a layman attempts to conduct a case himself, he is informed that he ought to employ counsel, and he gets but scant consideration. I have had personal experience of that fact. Another wrong done to me in this instance was the refusal of his Lordship to order an inquiry as to damages. I could

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have shown that I had suffered considerable damage. If my case, however, serves to call attention to the defects of the Copyright Act, and results in its amendment so as to afford authors greater protection, I shall be very well satisfied.

The subsequent history of the book was funny. The defendant delivered to me about 2000 copies—900 bound, the rest in quires. For a time they were stored in the cellars of my solicitor's offices. I was negotiating for their sale, and found it convenient to remove them to another office, where shortly afterwards a distraint was put in for rent, and my property being on the premises was seized, and sent to an auction-room with the furniture and other things. Whereupon I was necessitated to serve the auctioneer with notice that if he offered the work for sale he would be guilty of an illegal act by selling a copyright work without authority. At a later stage the story was used as a serial in *The Weekly Dispatch*, and finally I parted with all my interests in the work to a firm of publishers, who have since printed it in large numbers.

In dealing with the early history of the Savage Club I have mentioned that two volumes of short stories were issued under the editorship of Andrew Halliday entitled the "Savage Club Papers." About the beginning of 1896 there was an opinion freely expressed in the Club that the time had come when a new volume of papers might be prepared, and I was honoured by being requested to undertake the editing of the volume. This I did, spending two years on

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the work in collaboration with my dear friend, the late Herbert Johnston, as art editor. A more delightful companion to work with I never had. We had to surmount a good many difficulties ; but the book was completed at last, and issued by Messrs Hutchinson & Co. It was magnificently got up, and contained literary and art contributions by many of the most prominent members of the Club. On 22nd October 1897 I was gratified by a letter from the secretary, informing me that "the Committee had passed a vote of thanks unanimously in recognition of the valuable services" I had rendered with regard to the Savage Club Papers. The volume was issued to the public on Monday, the 27th of September 1897.

CHAPTER X

The Saturday Savage dinners—Distinguished guests—Ladies' nights—Our honorary secretary—A Nansen night—Good story by Lord Alverstone—The Indian princes—Phil May and the flower girl—Captain Scott and officers of the *Discovery*—Sudden death of a member while singing a song—Death of my friend, Paul Frenzeny—Brief particulars of some prominent members.

IN dealing with the Savage Club in a previous chapter I speak of the Club as being unique, and I claim that distinction for it on several grounds. On every Saturday evening for something like forty Saturdays in each year there is what is called "The House Dinner." It is an institution which dates back for more than a generation. Men from every quarter of the globe have been numbered in the famous gatherings : kings, princes, dukes, earls, counts, baronets, knights, generals, admirals, great explorers, great scientists, great divines, great judges, distinguished lawyers, litterateurs, ambassadors, consuls, poets—a long, long list : men of all colours, all nationalities. The hospitality of the Club has passed into a proverb, and to preside over these feasts is a privilege of which any member may feel proud. These weekly assemblies go on like the brook.

For men may come and men may go,
But one thing ever on must flow
Till Time's grey locks grow thinner.

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Though Church and State to limbo went
There must be no disestablishment
Of the Saturday Savage Dinner."

A wholesome rule, broken only on special occasions, is that all speeches are *taboo*. As soon as the feasting is over the Chairman for the evening rises, and commanding silence by striking the table with a ponderous club, exclaims: "Brother Savages, you may smoke." That is not only the signal for the lighting of pipes and cigars, but for the beginning of an entertainment, the like of which cannot be experienced anywhere else. The entertainers are all specialists in their particular lines, and one can hear the best of everything, songs, music, recitations, etc.—the "etc." covers a very wide range, from military bands to marvels and mysteries. Occasionally the Club-house has been graced with the presence of ladies—for the first time on the 6th of June 1891, when Mr Byron Webber wrote a special address of welcome. And at the annual dinner, which for some years now has been held at the Hotel Cecil, ladies lend an additional charm to the gathering, and are graciously permitted to gaze down from the height of the Golden Gallery on the Savages feeding below.

I have so many friends among the Savages that it seems almost invidious to single any of them out for special mention in these pages, but I feel that passing reference to a few who have done so much to uphold the traditions of the Club and to brighten the entertainments is unavoidable.

A conspicuous figure—and there are numerous con-

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spicuous figures—is the honorary secretary, Mr E. E. Peacock. For many years this gentleman has freely given his time and his talents for the benefit of the Club.

His face is an index to his mind. Graceful, tactful, genial, gentle, big-hearted, tender—these are some of the qualities which have endeared him to his brother Savages. To imagine that Peacock could think, let alone say, an unkind thing of any living being would be to do outrage to one of the most upright, biggest-hearted men it has ever been my privilege to count my friend. For a long period he represented *The Morning Post* in the gallery of the House of Commons, and some years ago was appointed manager of that splendidly edited journal. This well-deserved honour to a tried and faithful servant was made the *raison d'être* for his brother Savages to show how highly he was appreciated, and the "Peacock Night" will long be remembered. To Mr Peacock's organising and business capacity the Club owes much, and it did not forget its indebtedness when in honouring him it honoured itself. Mr Peacock has been honorary secretary for several years, and so much time has he given to his duties, and with such strenuous zeal has he studied the interests of the Club, that he was entertained at dinner on 11th June 1904, when the late James MacIntosh took the chair, and the guest of the evening was the recipient of a handsome testimonial from the members of the Club, who availed themselves of this opportunity of showing their practical appreciation of the honorary secretary's devoted services. The secretaryship of a club like the Savage



From a photograph by
Marshall H. and Gust
CHARLES COLLETTE, THE WELL-KNOWN ACTOR

To face page 276.



From a photograph by
MR. E. E. PEACOCK.
Manager of the Moving Picture and for many years Hon. Sec. of the
Savage Club.



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is by no means a sinecure. There have been many secretaries, but I believe Mr Peacock has held the position for a longer period than any of his predecessors.

Another good old member of world-wide popularity whose geniality and unvarying good temper has secured for him a host of friends, is Charles Collette, a man bubbling over with knowledge and cleverness, and yet modest and unostentatious withal.

He is the grandson of a brilliant and distinguished officer, the late General Collette of the Madras Cavalry, and for some time Governor of Jaulna, and as a young man fought under Wellington in India. His uncle was Colonel Collette, who commanded the 80th Regiment. As a very young man Charles was intended for the Bar, but hereditary instincts were too strong; he wanted to be a soldier, and his father bought him a commission with the 3rd Dragoon Guards. "Cheerful Charlie," as he was and is still called, distinguished himself as an officer, horseman, and great all-round sportsman, while as amateur actor he had few equals. On leaving the army he became a member of the theatrical profession, and his talents have given him a front rank position. As one of the Saturday night entertainers at the Club he is always sure of a hearty welcome. To hear "Cheerful Charlie's" patter recitations is a treat. His membership dates back to 1875.

Another man who is conspicuous in literature is quiet, clever Arthur Morrison.

Although he is still little more than a youth, he has made a big name for himself, and his "Child of the Jago," "Tales of Mean Street," and a dozen other

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books, including some very clever detective stories, will be known to generations yet unborn. He has a mania for collecting Japanese paintings, but in all other respects is one of the sanest of men I know. Like the sailor's parrot, Arthur doesn't talk much; but he thinks a lot, and the results of his thinking are at long intervals a brilliant book, which inflates his banking account to a ridiculous extent; but then the mania—well, it means that after more thinking the reading world is enriched by another brilliant book, while Arthur's collection of things Japanese is increased, so we can forgive his little weakness.

Then we have many sweet-voiced singers, prominent amongst them being handsome, full-chested Franklin Clive, who is an artist to the tips of his fingers. When Franklin gets on his hind legs the Clubmen know that they will have a treat. His "El-Dorado" and "On the Road to Mandalay" live in one's memory. While as for his "Drinking" (I trust that there will be no misunderstanding here, and that I shall not be served with a writ for libel), it somehow seems to get into your blood, and when the applause has subsided the waiters, it is noted, are in great request. Mr Clive has long been known as a concert and operatic artist; he was enrolled a member of the good old Club more than twenty years ago. He is beyond doubt a vocalist of great prominence, while his operatic work with Mapleson at Covent Garden, in *Ivanhoe* with the Carl Rosa, and other opera companies, proved him to be an able and excellent actor.

And what of Courtice Pounds? Brother he is,



ARTHUR MORRISON,

To face page 278.



From a photograph by the
Biograph Studio, Regent St.,
FRANKLIN CLAVE.

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members crowded into the room. It was certainly one of the biggest nights in the history of the celebrated Club. For myself, I was greatly impressed with Nansen. He has a wonderful face and head, and in his manner and bearing suggests great force of character, an iron will, quick decision, tremendous powers of endurance, and withal a singular modesty. Of course, on an auspicious occasion like the one I here allude to, the wholesome rule of "No speeches" was relaxed. Nansen, it will be remembered, had, with one companion, performed a feat in the way of Arctic travelling which was without parallel. That journey of theirs over the ice was a marvellous journey, and the wonder is that they lived through it. It was natural, therefore, that we Savages should want to hear from the traveller's own lips how he had fared, what his feelings were, what his thoughts were, and so he told us a good deal, and told it in a charming and modest way. He struck the keynote in the first words: "I'm as much entitled to be called a savage as any of you. I haven't used soap for two years." This seemed for the moment a grave reflection on the Savages, for occasionally they do use soap; and there is a tradition that one or two have even been known to take a bath, so out came the scalping-knives; but there was a magnetising smile on the bronzed face of the explorer; that smile saved him, and with one accord we claimed him for our own. He wrote his name on the wall of the dining-room; he drew a sketch map, and for a while held a great gathering under his spell. Dr Fridtjof Nansen has

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certainly marked his name on the pages of history so that it won't come off, and to the end of time it will stand amidst the long list of brave, devoted, and determined men who have sought so gallantly to wrest Nature's secret from the weird solitudes around the Poles.

On the following Monday there was a reception by the Royal Geographical Society of Dr Nansen at the Albert Hall, when there was something like 10,000 persons present. It was a never-to-be-forgotten night. His Excellency Dr Nansen is now the Norwegian Minister in London. He took the Chair at the annual dinner of the club in December 1906. He has been good enough to favour me with his autograph, which I hear reproduce in facsimile.

On 6th July 1901 the officers and members of the Antarctic Expedition, including Captain R. P. Scott, R.N., were the guests. Mr W. E. Smith, one of the chief constructors to the Admiralty, was in the chair. It was a great night. A few years before we had welcomed Nansen when he so mysteriously reappeared out of the darkness of the North; now we had assembled to wish God speed to a band of brave men who were going forth to the frozen South in the interests of science. Captain Scott made no attempt to minimise the perils he and his comrades would be called upon to face; it would have been affectation to have done so; but with the enthusiasm of youth and the zeal of the explorer he spoke with cheery optimism, and expressed a hope that he would have the honour of being welcomed by the Club on his return. The

Legation
de
Norwége.

Londres, le 15 février
1877.

Dear Mr. Muddock

I am so sorry that I have
not been able to write you
before in reply to your note
which I found here on my
return from Norway. But
here you have my autograph.

Yours sincerely

Fridtjof Naumen.

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entertainment provided that night was an exceptionally good one, and was greatly appreciated by our guests. At this notable gathering some lightning sketches were done by an artist member of the Club, and presented to Captain Scott, who took them with him to the Antarctic.

On 8th March 1902 Brother Savage Lord Alverstone, G.C.M.G., the Lord Chief Justice of England, was in the chair. He told a number of amusing experiences. One was of a post office prosecution at Hertford Assizes, and as I believe it has never seen the light of print, I tell it here. A clever Irish barrister appeared for the defendant, who was a poor letter-carrier who had been guilty of some irregularity. Among the witnesses was Anthony Trollope.

"What are you?" asked the Irish barrister in a severe and a commanding tone, sonorous with a rich brogue.

"An official in the post office," answered Trollope, somewhat astonished by the Irish gentleman's brusqueness.

"Anything else?" demanded the Counsel, with a snap.

"Yes; an author." This a little proudly.

"What is the name of your last book?"

"'Barchester Towers.'"

"Now tell me is there a word of truth in that book?"

"Well, it is what is generally called a work of fiction."

"Fiction!" with a scornful curl of the lip. "Fiction!"

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(he pronounced it Ficshion). "That is to say there isn't a word of truth in it from beginning to end?"

"I—I am afraid, if you put it that way, there isn't," stammered Trollope in an embarrassed way.

With a triumphant chuckle the Counsel turned to the jury, and exclaimed, with a chuckle :—

"Gentlemen, how can you possibly convict a man on the evidence of a witness like this, who here in this Court of Justice unblushingly confesses that he has written a book in which there is not a word of truth?"

The Counsel got his man off, and subsequently when relating his triumph, said Trollope was one of the finest witnesses he had ever had to deal with.

On 12th April 1902 Sir Henry Irving was entertained by the Club on his return from America. Among the notable actors and others present were Beerbohm Tree, George Alexander, H. B. Irving, Lawrence Irving, Sir J. D. Linton, Sir W. P. Treloar. The chair was occupied by Dr Phineas Abrahams, a very distinguished member of the medical profession. It was a memorable evening. Sir Henry referred with pride to his long association with the Club (he was elected in 1871), and pathetically hinted that night at his probable retirement from the stage at an early date owing to advancing years. He said it would be a tremendous wrench when the retirement came, and then he added with strange significance : "Perhaps the severance may come and find me still in harness."

12th July 1902 will ever be remembered as "The Indian Night." The guests were the Indian princes

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then in London. They included Sir Jamsetjee Jeejee Bhoy, The Hon. Nawab Hati Ali Khan Kizh-bosh, Nawab Haiaz Ali Khan of Pahasee, Colonel Nawab Mahomed Aslam Khan. Some of these gentlemen wore jewels worth a king's ransom, but the gentle Savages allowed them to depart with their valuables and their scalps. It reflects very creditably on the Savages.

On 5th August 1903 that clever but erratic genius, Phil May, died, at the age of thirty-nine, and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. He was one of the most remarkable men of his age. A lovable, wayward, self-willed, gifted fellow, who by a few strokes of his pencil could earn big fees, which he squandered with princely prodigality as soon as he got them. One evening I left the Club with him to catch a train at the Underground Station, Charing Cross. On the way he would insist on going into Gatti's. A ragged, draggled, half-starved, but picturesque flower girl came in and offered him a bunch of violets. He accepted the flowers, and put two sovereigns into her hand. She was almost paralysed with astonishment by the receipt of so much money. Thinking a mistake had been made, I took the money from her, but Phil peremptorily told me to return it. "I can do what I like with my own money," he said. Then he posed the girl, and made a wonderful sketch of her in his note-book. When the child went away, clutching like grim death those two precious coins, she moved like one in a dream. Two pounds was a fortune to her, and for once at anyrate that ragged

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child was happy. He often made me the subject of some of his caricatures, for he was no respecter of persons. Poor Phil! He died too soon, but the work he did will hand his name down to posterity. He had starved and suffered, and when success came to him his constitution gave way, and he knew he was doomed.

There is another characteristic story of him I am tempted to relate. He and I were at a banquet at the Cecil, when, at the close of a speech, he asked me to accompany him to the bar, which was deserted when we entered. Soon, however, there came from another room, where the employees of a certain large drapery firm were having a dinner to celebrate some occasion in connection with the firm, two or three young men in evening dress. I heard one of these men say to a companion: "Why, I believe that's Phil May. Blowed if I don't speak to him." He came to where we stood, and with outstretched hand said, with some faltering: "Mr May, may I have the pleasure of shaking your hand?" The cheery Bohemian shook, and at once invited the new acquaintance to partake of refreshment. Of course, his companions were included. Then by some mysterious means the rest of the drapers were apprised. They swarmed into the bar, and Phil played the host to the whole lot, until there was a heavy score to settle. Ultra-respectable people will condemn this as folly. So it was—the folly of a generous, impulsive man, who believed and acted up to the belief that money was not the only thing in the world worth living for. And then, what of those drapers' assistants?

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To them it was a red-letter day in their monotonous lives. They didn't want the drink, they didn't want the cigars, that the host dispensed with such prodigality ; what they appreciated was being entertained by a genius who had made himself famous in two hemispheres. Many of them would no doubt cherish the memory of that evening as long as they lived, and think of Phil May with many a kindly thought. It is something to give pleasure to a large number of people, even though it has to be done by the exercise of a little folly.

On the 3rd of November 1904 the Club again entertained Captain Scott and his gallant officers of the *Discovery* after their three years' magnificently brilliant work in the South Polar regions. The lightning sketches presented to the Captain on his departure he brought back, and returned them to the Club, and they now adorn the walls of the Club-room. They bear the signatures of Captain Scott and all his officers. If the send-off night had been a great one, the welcome home was greater. We had said farewell with concealed misgivings ; but three years had flown—how quickly they *had* flown!—and here were our guests back again, after splendid work done, and we shouted our welcome. Death had been busy among the Savages, and once familiar faces were missed ; but the *Discovery's* crew had come up from those ghastly regions of ice and snow away down under, and they had left only one comrade behind. Of the many Polar expeditions that have set out from Albion's white shores, this one was surely the most

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fortunate, and Captain Scott told us it was partly due to the Savage Club. He and his officers had been so impressed with the entertainment provided for their enjoyment when we bade them good-bye that down in the South Polar regions they got up entertainments on the same lines, and enjoyed themselves so much that they had no time for sadness; and so far from being dull were they that they laughed at the blizzards, mocked at the storms, defied the ice, revelled in the snow, and kept themselves warm with thinking of the cheery Savage Club. Robust, healthy, and happy they all looked as they feasted in the Club's cosy wigwam for the second time, and there was no mistaking the cordiality of the welcome we gave them. A very original menu was done by Dudley Hardy.

On the 6th of May 1905 the Saturday night dinner was abruptly ended by a sad tragedy. We were entertaining the members of the International Congress of Journalists, and my friend, S. S. Campion, a well-known journalist, was in the chair. Mr Charles Arnold, the popular actor, was standing at the piano singing a song bearing the title of "We take off our Hats to the King," and had reached the third verse, when he suddenly faltered, and fell dead. It was a terrible shock to us all, and we departed in silence.

Arnold had distinguished himself as a character actor, and was particularly happy in the enormously successful farce entitled *What happened to Jones*, produced at the Strand Theatre some years ago.



AN UNFINISHED SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.
By Paul Frenzeny a few days before his death.

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A GROUP OF SAVAGES FROM FRENZENY'S SKETCH-BOOK.



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He subsequently went on a long tour, and according to report, made a fortune. He had but recently returned when his end came so tragically and dramatically on that fatal 6th of May. I was sitting quite near to where he fell, and at once my mind reverted to the night of years ago, when poor George Grossmith was suddenly called.

Among the many men to whom I had been drawn by sympathy and tastes in common was the late Paul Frenzeny, artist, traveller, linguist, scholar, and good fellow. Paul, by birth a Breton, was a walking romance. He had been everywhere, seen everything, known everybody. He was erratic, as every man of genius is, but possessed a keen sense of honour, was loyal and staunch to his friends. He understood to the full the spirit and essence of camaraderie. Not only had he those magnetic qualities which endear a man to his fellows, but his marvellous intellect charmed you. I was certainly charmed with him. He was not only an exceptionally good classical scholar, but had an amazing knowledge of European literature. Soldier, sailor, rancher, explorer, gold digger, wanderer, artist, litterateur, he had seen life in all its phases. He and I were greatly attached, and had arranged to collaborate a book of travellers' stories together, which he was to illustrate. He had been absent from London for some time, and returned in April 1906, unfortunately out of health, but sanguine of recovery when the warm weather set in; for like myself, he was a sun-worshipper. I saw with pain and sadness, however, how he grew gradually

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weaker, and there was a noticeable failure of his mental powers. On Thursday, the 3rd May, we sat together in the Savage Club, and he arranged to come to my house on the Sunday. The day arrived, and passed, but did not bring my friend. Knowing his singular punctiliousness, I felt sure that by Monday morning's post I should be in possession of a letter; but again I was disappointed. On Tuesday, on entering the Club, I was shocked to read a notice of his death. He had been occupying apartments near the Euston Road, and all that terrible Sunday was so ill that he was unable to lie down, but sat in a chair, lonely and unattended. He was in that chair on the Monday morning when a chamber-maid went to his room, but he was stone dead. He had been dead for hours. Of course, an inquest was held, which I attended, and I followed my friend to his final resting-place in Highgate Cemetery. Even when the mists of death were dimming his eyes and numbing his brain, he remembered his engagement with me, as the following letters, which were found on his desk, will prove. He commenced one, and the ruling passion being strong in death, he made a sketch of a face, whose I know not, but it is clear from the wording of the letter that his mind was wandering.

The second is complete. Which of the two was written first it is difficult to say; but for me these scraps of paper have a mournful and pathetic interest.

For some time before his end he had been making a number of sketches of members of the Club for an esteemed and old member, Mr James MacIntosh, who

36 Fitzroy St. W.

Sunday

6th May 1906

My dear Mustock

(not

I am indeed very sorry, I must keep my promise. I feel too low and hopelessly sleepy to inflict my watched company on kind people and friends. I hope you had a beautiful Sunday

Yours always

D. Frenzeny

36 Fitzroy St.

Sunday.

My dear Mustock

I felt too low and broken down today. I tried my best, but I thought best

LETTERS FOUND ON PAUL FRENZENY'S DESK AFTER HIS DEATH. PROBABLY WRITTEN AN HOUR OR TWO BEFORE HE DIED.

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has since followed him into the silent land. Curiously enough, the very last one in his sketch-book, now in my possession, is an unfinished drawing of myself, which is here reproduced.

It was hurriedly done on the Wednesday afternoon preceding his death, and he promised to finish it on the Sunday at my house. The following Wednesday it was my painful duty to attend the inquest that was held to inquire into the cause of my dear friend's death. I reproduce over leaf two portraits of Paul Frenzeny. One represents him as he was a few years before his health broke down, and the other taken by his wife a very short time before the end came.

The other sketches in the sketch-book I have already alluded to constitute a little gallery of brother Savages. I therefore reproduce them. They are the work of a dying artist, and can hardly fail to be of interest to those whom they represent.

Frenzeny's career in his native France was a distinguished one, and, impelled by a strong love of adventure, he found himself in the United States during the great Civil War which nearly rent the country asunder. At a later date he was present in his capacity of a French military officer at the trial and execution of the ill-starred Maximilian in Mexico. And later still, as a major of artillery, he fought through the Franco-Prussian War, and witnessed the carnage and the débâcle of France on the bloody field of Sedan. But these are mere details in the strangely adventurous life of Paul Frenzeny. As a black and white artist he did splendid work for years for *The Illustrated*

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London News and other papers, and was as gifted with his pen as he was with his pencil, while his varied career furnished him with material such as few men can command. It was my proud privilege to be able to count myself as one of Paul Frenzeny's most intimate friends, and I loved the man. Possessed of magnificent courage, an iron will, and a proud, defiant spirit, he bore his great sufferings in silence, trying to conceal, even from those who knew him best, to what extent his sufferings were accentuated by lack of means. His going out left a blank in my life. I knew so much of the goodness that was in him, I admired his splendid courage, and his intellect appealed to me. To lose a friend is sad at any time, but the sadness is enhanced and the pathos deepened when the friend whose hand you have clasped but a few hours before dies as Paul Frenzeny died. His summons came to him in the dead of night in a mean London lodging, when all whom he loved, and who loved him, were far away. His landlady, a kind-hearted woman, I imagine, would no doubt have rendered her lodger such assistance as was within her scope had she but known of his condition. But he remained grimly silent. It is difficult to believe he was in ignorance of the nearness of his end; indeed, I am convinced from his letter to me that he knew the last sands of his life were running out. He recognised, however, that no human power could save him, and he scorned to put strangers to any trouble. It was an act of heroism. His end had come, and he faced it like a man and a soldier, but those who loved him



FRENZENY FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HIS WIFE. TAKEN
A FEW WEEKS BEFORE HIS DEATH.



PAUL FRENZENY TAKEN SOME YEARS BEFORE HIS DEATH.

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can but regret that he died in solitude and in a house where he was unknown. God grant that in that supreme moment when the mists of death were dimming his eyes, some sense of duty done, some effort made to leave the world a little better than he had found it, enabled him to feel that he had earned his rest. He bore his fate with heroic patience, steadfast will, indomitable courage, and I for one will not believe that so brave a spirit has suffered extinction by the final triumph of bodily disease. If Frenzeny failed to write his name on the enduring tablets of fame, it was due to a force of circumstance he could not control. What his hand found to do he did with all his might ; there was no sordidness in his nature ; he had great ideals, and though he recognised the impossibility of realising them, he strove ever to reach a higher plane. He was generous to a fault, peculiarly tolerant of those weaknesses common to all humanity, and where he could not praise, he could not blame. May the turf lie lightly on him !

I feel that these rambling notes of the dear old Savage Club would hardly be complete without a few words about another good friend, Edwin A. Ward, the distinguished portrait painter, whose portrait of myself forms the frontispiece of this book.

Mr Ward is a gentleman of marked originality, whose cheery optimism and old-world courtesy make him a welcome guest wherever he goes. As a portrait painter he ranks very high in his noble art, and his genius has brought him commissions from most of the celebrities of the day. Some years ago Mr

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Henry Lucy resolved to form a private portrait gallery of celebrated people, and in looking about for an artist competent to undertake so important a commission, he chose Mr Ward, who executed portraits of the following distinguished persons:—John Morley, Joseph Cowen, Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord Rosebery, A. J. Balfour, Joe Chamberlain, Sir John Tenniel, Sir Francis Burnand, Henry Labouchere, Lord Russell of Killowen, and Sir Henry Irving.

Mr Ward also painted a portrait of the late Cecil Rhodes for Lord Northcliffe. Subsequently Ward was induced to visit India in order to paint the portraits of some of the most prominent princes and rajahs. He travelled extensively through the country; thence to Japan, where he astonished the Japanese by his marvellous facility in catching the expression and natural pose of his sitters.

Another artist very well known in the Club is W. H. J. Boot, art editor of *The Strand Magazine* from its foundation. Before that appointment he had done an enormous amount of black and white work; drew for *The Graphic*, *Illustrated London News*, and most of the other illustrated papers. Book illustration also kept his pencil busy, and he was responsible for many of the illustrations which appear in *Cassell's Picturesque Mediterranean* and *Picturesque Europe*, which necessitated his travelling much on the Continent as well as in Great Britain. He has frequently exhibited in the Royal Academy, and in all the principal provincial art galleries, and for the last seven years he has been Vice-President of the Royal Society of British



W. H. J. BOOT.

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Photo, Ernest H. Mills]

MOSTYN T. PIGOTT.

[Hamfstead.

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Artists. Mr Boot is a cultured Bohemian, a staunch friend, and a lovable man.

The editor, and, I believe, originator, of *The Strand Magazine* is Mr H. Greenhaugh Smith, M.A., whose marked editorial abilities have given the *Strand* its position as one of, if not *the* most, popular magazine in the world. Mr Smith is an old and popular member of the Club.

Among other distinguished "Black and White" men who lend lustre to the Club are W. H. Pike, R.B.A. — "Billy" as his familiars are privileged to call him—and bland, genial Douglas Almond. Many of the special menus of the Club dinners have emanated from the clever pencils of these two gentlemen.

Science is well represented, and not the least conspicuous member is Gordon A. Salamon, F.C.S., who stands in the front rank of his profession, and holds a high place in the esteem of his brother Savages. Mr Salamon is a big-hearted man who never lets his right hand know what his left does. And another Savage of the good old sort, whose hand I am always proud to shake, is Mostyn T. Pigott, M.A., B.C.L., who is also one of the ready versifiers, an eloquent and impressive speaker, with a caustic but kindly wit, and a great power of brilliant repartee.

Mr Pigott is a contributor to many of the leading papers, including *The World*, and as he is still youthful, he may yet do great things. I asked him to write me a few lines for this chapter of my book, with the following result :—

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TO J. E. MUDDOCK

On being asked for some Verses

You ask for some lines,
Say twenty or so?
With no fell designs
You ask for some lines.
No Savage inclines
To answering no.
You ask for some lines,
Say twenty or so?

With what shall I deal?
My mind is a blank,
My five senses reel.
With what shall I deal?
If I'm imbecile
Yourself is to thank.
With what shall I deal?
My mind is a blank.

Please take will for deed—
Accept it as such.
For mercy I plead,
Please take will for deed,
Since triolets need
Not mean overmuch.
Please take will for deed
Accept it as such!

I am sorry I caught my friend at a moment when his mind was a blank; it is not often so. But still, coming from a blank mind, the above are creditable. Mostyn Pigott was born in the year—— Well, as will be seen, he hasn't yet got over the irresponsibilities of youth, though he has had the measles, and has cut his wisdom teeth. He is a Westminster boy, was a member of University College, Oxford, and came out with honours in Classics and Law. He is an M.A. and a

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B.C.L. He was called to the Bar with a scholarship, though has hardly practised at all, but has coached pupils for Bar exams. and passed a large number through. However, although he may be an ornament to Law, Literature, which is infinitely better than Law, has claimed him; thank goodness, and the Law may go hang. It sha'n't have our Mostyn. As far back as 1892 he founded and edited *The Isis*, which is still the leading under-graduates' paper in Oxford. He has composed and written a great number of humorous songs and political squibs. His verses are excruciatingly funny, but his handwriting is vile. It is said that he dare not enter the composing-room of any magazine to which he contributes, as the compositors have vowed to slay him on sight. His caligraphy would almost drive Sir Wilfrid Lawson to drink. How is it these men of genius will write such villainous hands? No compositor has ever threatened to kill me. However, he is such an excellent fellow that I forgive him for his execrable scrawls, and am proud to be able to call myself his friend. Mostyn is the right sort of Savage, and upholds the best traditions of the Club.

I am afraid I should be guilty of an unfriendly act, to use a diplomatic phrase, if I omitted some reference to genial Colonel A. Bosworth, a soldier and a gentleman.

Before he became a Colonel knowledge was drilled into him at King Edward VI. Grammar School, Birmingham. The drilling operation seems to have been very successful, and in due time he was rewarded with a real steel-cutting sword and an eye-glass. I

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wish I could persuade him to wear a glass in the other eye ; but no, these handsome fellows won't. They say that with one glass they see all that they want to see ; if they wore two they might see things that would shock them. From this I am led to infer that the monocle may be taken as an indication of a highly sensitive nature. Nevertheless, the Colonel has done things. He edited *The Broad Arrow* ; he has contributed much to contemporary literature ; he founded the Roehampton Military College more than twenty years ago. During the South African campaign he commanded the 2nd Provisional Battalion, Aldershot, and he now commands the respect and esteem of his brother Savages, in spite of his being an ardent (not a hardened) motorist, and the owner of a swell motor car, which, of course, makes him beastly respectable. He's a Bohemian all the same. He has shot elephants in Ceylon, and similar fearful wild fowl in other parts of the world.

Another old and popular member of the Club is Thomas Catling, who after fifty years of faithful and devoted service to Messrs Lloyd of newspaper fame has recently retired, and been publicly feasted and testimonialled. For a great many years Mr Catling occupied the position of editor of *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, with infinite credit to himself, and profit to the great firm he represented. During his long editorial career he has known all the leading lights in Literature, Science, and Art of his day, and he is a walking encyclopædia of the events of the last fifty years or so. Moreover, he has travelled far, seen



Photo.

COL. A. BOSWORTH.

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Messrs. Tassie & Co.



THOMAS CATLING

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much, and has had many interesting experiences. Mr Catling was elected a member of the renowned Club in April 1873, and in January 1876 he was elected honorary auditor, a position he has held ever since. The accompanying photograph of Catling was taken about the time of his election to the Club, and though he has grown older since, he is the same handsome, genial, generous Savage as of old. Long may he live to enjoy his well-earned repose after upwards of half-a-century of strenuous life.

It is good sometimes to see ourselves as others see us, therefore I am gratified in being able to reproduce my portrait according to Mr Tom Browne, on whose shoulders the mantle of poor Phil May has fallen.

That T. B. has successfully delineated my pose, my aggressive mien, and the graceful hang of the nether garments, will, I think, be admitted by all who know me. The distinguished artist, Edwin A. Ward, led me to believe that his likeness of my humble person was a good one, but I am evidently conspicuous by little physical peculiarities which Mr Ward overlooked and Browne has seen; which of these two eminent men is correct I must leave others to decide. On such a delicate subject I can offer no opinion. Browne is as good a Savage as he is a good artist. That he is the first is the opinion of the whole Club; that he is the second is proved by his world-wide reputation. For a young man to have made a great name and fortune before he has hardly reached mid-life is something to be proud of. That Tom Browne is absurdly young and beastly good-looking will be gathered

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from the very excellent photograph which is reproduced below. He is at work on a Dutch picture (he has a weakness for things Dutch), which I suppose he transferred to some collector for a paltry few thousands.

Tom Browne, like Phil May, was not born to riches. He hails from Nottingham, and Nottingham may well be proud of him. That some day his native town will put up a statue of him there isn't a doubt, His youth was a struggle with poverty and adversity ; but talent cannot be hidden under a bushel. At one period he was an errand boy to a firm of milliners in his native place ; he inadvertently hit the boss in the eye with a lump of orange peel, which was intended for another boy, and was promptly kicked out. This proves that T. B. was not in those days a good shot. He is now, for he belongs to a crack Yeomanry corps. Art is to be congratulated, for thanks to that little incident he betook himself to a lithographer, with whom he worked for a whole year for the munificent wage of nothing a week. During that period he must have lived on air, as the chameleon is said to do, and when at the age of fifteen he apprenticed himself to another firm of lithographers, and began with a shilling a week, he no doubt felt passing rich. And what of his thoughts when at the age of seventeen he sent a comic sketch to a London weekly and promptly received thirty shillings for it? He does not tell us what he did with that unexpectedly acquired wealth, but it is on record that it stirred his zeal ; he resolved to become a black and white artist and a painter. His resolve has been carried out.



THE AUTHOR, ACCORDING TO TOM BROWNE.

"Oh! wad some power the giftie gie us,
Tae see oursels as ithers see us."

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His black and white work is known everywhere, and he has been a pretty constant exhibitor at the Royal Academy since 1897. In 1898 he was elected a member of the Royal Society of British Artists, and three years later had the honour of being admitted to the charmed circle of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours. How many millions of money have flowed into his coffers since then I must not state lest the income-tax people come down upon him. They are so precious sharp are those people when a fellow makes another hundred thousand or so a year. Being so ridiculously young, he was not enrolled among the immortal Savages until seven years ago, but to-day he is by no means the least prominent of them. He has in him the stuff that intellectual Bohemians are made of, and there can be no question about his popularity. He has travelled extensively, seen much, and learnt a lot. Kudos has come to him, though it hasn't spoilt him. Tom Browne puts on no side, but is a lovable, genial, gentle Savage. He will caricature his bosom friend—he cannot help it; but he has never been known to scalp his enemy: that may be due to the fact that he has no enemy. Tom Browne is a humorist. Humour is the very quiddity of his art. He would take liberties with the Equator, and turn Death itself into a joke.

Of course among the Savages there are wizards and what nots. Wizards who do uncanny things, and make your hair rise. There's Charlie Bertram, for instance. Look at him.

But fancy a professor of the Black Art in a stove

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pipe hat! It is perfectly ridiculous! Probably he wears it to deceive people; he's always deceiving people, and then coolly exclaims: "Isn't it wonderful?" I verily believe he would deceive his dear old grandmother by turning her into a white cat, and making her believe she was a swan. I said to him one day:

"Charlie, is it true you have sold your s——"

"No, no; on my honour, old fellow, it isn't," he interrupted in an excited, perturbed way. "It's really too bad that such reports should be spread about. Of course, people think I have, but I haven't. I am quite a good man; I am indeed, and would scorn to have anything to do with him——"

"With whom?"

"Why the d——"

"What *are* you jabbering about, Charlie? I was going to ask you, when you interrupted me, if it's true that you've sold the solid gold diamond studded casket presented to you by the Maharajah what's his name, and bought a palace?"

"Oh!" he exclaimed cheerfully, and drawing a sigh of relief. "The fact is, my friend King Woolloomooloo took a fancy to it, and I presented it to him. You see, a trifle like that gold box isn't worth considering by a magician." It is evident that authors are not in it with wizards when it comes to a question of making money. But then Charlie has been twice round the world. He travelled from one end of India to the other, and has been entertained by kings and queens, maharajahs and ranees, and a perfect host of minor swells. He has entertained the King and



TOM BROWNE IN HIS STUDIO.

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Queen of England and members of the Royal family, a score or so of times, and done other clever things. He was once going to give an entertainment before the officers of the Hon. A. C. and their friends. He asked me to go with him, and I went. He said I could assist him, and I did. He promised me he would make a wizard of me and I should then be able to earn thousands, but he didn't. The assistantship consisted of my holding a pack of cards. They disappeared out of my hand, and I didn't know they had gone. He said I was a duffer, and I wept. "Never mind; don't weep," he whispered sympathetically; "I'll find them." He did. He found them in the Colonel's top-boot. I'm sure I didn't put them there. All he said was: "Isn't it wonderful?"

With a view to my becoming a wizard, he tried to teach me a marvellous trick with ten pennies. "It's quite simple," he remarked, with his bewizardingsmile. "You hold them like this. See. Then you lay them down thus. You next place them in a row, then you make the first one last, next put the last where the fourth and fifth are, and dexterously place the third under the second, bringing them altogether, and you'll find instead of ten there are six. And there you are. It's so easy, a child can do it, Now try." I did, and there I was, but I didn't do the trick. He said I hadn't brains enough to be a wizard, and he gave me up as a bad job. "You are not angry?" he asked. "No," I said; "I'm humbled."

"Well, never mind, old fellow. We can't all be wizards, and to show there's no ill feeling, let us——

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And we did. Since the above was written my poor friend has gone over to the majority. Mr Charles Bertram died on the 27th of February of current year (1907), to the great regret of a very wide circle of friends. He was deservedly popular in the Savage Club, and will be greatly missed.

As for David Devant, who has joined interests with that other professor of the Black Art, Maskelyne, he has kept me awake o' nights. He smiles so sweetly, too, while he deceives you. He showed me a barrel. It had neither top nor bottom; you could see right through it. He put it on a trestle in a full blaze of light. He put a piece of tissue paper on the top and a piece on the bottom. In the blinking of an eye a real live old man broke through the tissue paper, and came out of the barrel. How did he get in? Don't ask me. All that I know is there was a strange smell of sulphur in the air, and I am sure that the old gentleman had cloven—— But there, why should I pursue the subject? David Devant is a free-born Briton, and can do what he likes with his own. Look at his portrait.

Anyone can see he is a magician. Note well his weird eye. Of course, he has two eyes in his face, and each one is weird. Then he has an eye at the back of his head. You don't see that, but what *he* sees with it is simply marvellous. The portrait is that of a very young, good-looking man. Why are all magicians good-looking? My own private opinion is that David is about a hundred years old, but has discovered the secret of perpetual youth. He is a



CHARLES BERTRAM. (From a sketch by Frenzeny.)



DAVID DEVANT.

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light now in the "Home of Mystery." In his own home, where there is no mystery, he and his other partner entertain their friends with princely hospitality, and give them a high old time.

There is another wizard in the Club capable of doing uncanny things in the person of Robert Ganthony, a member of a clever and distinguished family which includes Miss Nellie Ganthony, and Richard Ganthony of *A Message from Mars* fame. Robert combines with his powers of wizardry the art of ventriloquism, and an inventive faculty that has enabled him to initiate some very startling illusions. He has travelled extensively; been entertained by, and has entertained, royalty; and was privileged to accompany the late W. E. Gladstone round Europe in the *Tantallon Castle* as magician-in-ordinary, and professor of the Black Art extraordinary. There is a funny little story in connection with that trip which I don't think has ever been told before in print. One evening after dinner, just as the vessel was steaming out of a Norwegian port, the party in the saloon were startled by a child's screams proceeding from one of the cabins. Instantly there was a scene of consternation, and a rush was made for the cabin, but the door was found to be locked. Then a gruff voice was heard in the cabin threatening to cut the child's throat if it didn't keep quiet. The cries of terror from the child became louder than ever, and Mr Gladstone showed great concern. The key of the door was called for. The steward came, but had no knowledge of the key. The cries increased.

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More excitement. "For God's sake break open the door," exclaimed somebody; and carried away by his feelings, a stalwart member of the party applied his broad shoulders with such good effect that the door flew open, and the cabin was found to be empty. At the same time Robert Ganthony was observed stealthily quitting the saloon. The scare was complete while the excitement lasted, and the laughter hearty when the guests learned that they had been sold. Ganthony certainly scored a point there; he has also scored as the author of several humorous works, and three or four comedies, the most successful perhaps being *Uncle Jack*. Mr Ganthony is an old member of the Club, having joined in 1884.

I once heard an irresponsible person aver that savages didn't live long. I don't know what savages he meant, but in our coterie we have some pretty ancient ones. Manuel Garcia who only departed from amongst us last year (1906) was a hundred. Tegetmeier, and Lal Brough, two of the founders of the Club still remain, and the first named youth is only ninety-one. Tegetmeier, W.B., F.Z.S., is a naturalist, a journalist, and was a friend of Darwin's. He has had a distinguished career, and what he doesn't know about natural history isn't worth learning. And it is only natural that he should love the old Club whose birth he attended.

I often wonder what the Club would do without "The Colonel." Here is his portrait from a drawing by the late Paul Frenzeny.

Lieutenant-Colonel Rogers; Ebenezer Rogers, if



Colonel E. Rogers



ROBERT GANTHONY.

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you please, and he hails from Ould Oireland. Fancy an Irishman being labelled "Ebenezer." However, if our Colonel had been named Beelzebub we should still have loved him. As the portrait shows, the Colonel is old and grizzled, as becomes a colonel who has seen many years of service in the tropics. How old he is it is difficult to say, but he numbers his years by scores, is as tough as India-rubber, and has the vigour of a youth of thirty. He is a champion fluker—indeed, has reduced fluking at billiards to a fine art—and there isn't a man in the Club can come near him. Then his sense of humour is keen, as becomes a man of the Emerald Isle. He tried his humour on the Committee not long ago, but that time he didn't score. I should explain that if a brother Savage dies in any part of the British Islands a wreath is sent in name of the Club to be deposited on the coffin. As the Colonel does not seem like shaking off this mortal coil for another score of years yet, and as he could not see what possible use the wreath would be to him when he was dead, he applied to the Committee for the value of it. In a characteristic letter he said :

"I am willing to forego the floral tribute in favour of purchasing a pipe to be played for in a billiard handicap on behalf of the fund now being raised for orphans of actors. Might I therefore be allowed to discount the future to this small extent?"

In due course he received the following reply from the secretary :—

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"The Committee considered your letter yesterday, and on the whole *they prefer to send you a wreath.*"

Despite his sense of humour, the dear old sinner is still racking his brains to understand the precise meaning of the italicised sentence. "What could I do with it if I had it?" he remarked. "I couldn't pawn it, and I couldn't preserve the bally thing in water until I'm dead."

"Of course not," replied a sympathiser; "though you might preserve it in Irish whisky. Anyway, don't you die, Colonel, just to please the Committee."

"No; I'll see them in Jericho first," roared the Colonel; and the glasses jumped as he banged his fist on the table, and then to solace his wounded feelings he ordered in a jorum of his special brew.

I for one hope that the Committee will not be called upon to buy a wreath for many a long day to come. Of course, our Colonel can tell some very funny yarns that require a lot of digesting. Indeed, some of the Colonel's yarns have been known to upset his listeners for a week at a time, and on more than one occasion the victim has threatened to tomahawk him. But his highly polished pate, his broad smile, and general geniality always disarm wrath, and the victims, like Oliver Twist, ask for more.

I should like much to particularise other of my friends among the Savage brotherhood, but I am afraid that were I to do so I should very far exceed the limits of the space at my disposal. It is but reiteration for me to say that the "Savage" is a Club



PINHORN WOOD (Artist).
From Frenzeny's Sketch-book.

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of which any man may well feel proud of being a member. I myself regard it with an affection I can hardly express. Of course, and of necessity it must be so, the Club has undergone a process of change as its age has increased, and the old Bohemian spirit which was so dear to its earlier members seems in danger of ultimately being replaced by a conventionalism which in my opinion is most undesirable in such an institution. Naturally, the modern young man has different ideas from the young man of half-a-century and more ago. But in spite of the strenuous life we lead, and the feverish desire nowadays to be considered somebody, I would appeal to the love of intellectual freedom *si qua est* of the newer generation to preserve as a precious heritage the best traditions which brought the Club together and has held it together so long. There is a Bohemianism recognised by literature and art which aims at all that is beautiful, noble, and true, which scorns littleness and commonplaceness, which hates snobbishness, and detests the huckstering spirit of the mere "cheap Jack." That is the Bohemianism I have loved and tried to cultivate, and it is the Bohemianism which, I trust, will be upheld and honoured by all who affect the cult of the dignity of letters and the beauty of art. It is the Bohemianism that has been, and must continue to be, the principle, the life, the very soul, of the Savage Club. Destroy that Bohemianism and the exclusiveness and unique character of the Club will go with it.

CHAPTER XI

I visit La Grande Chartreuse, and have a weird experience—A visit to the Grotto de Ste Baume in Provence—A send-off dinner—A trip to the West Indies—Dick Donovan's books—Amusing incidents—An explanation—The universal demand for the detective story—The late Prince Bismark a great reader of Donovan's books—The butcher and the artist : a story with a moral.

RECENT events in France, which have led to such a pitiable quarrel between Church and State, have recalled to my mind a visit I paid years ago to the lonely and romantic monastery of the Grande Chartreuse. It was some time before the monks were expelled from the old home and driven to seek shelter and hospitality in Spain. That visit is an incident in my life which will possibly be read with interest at this time, for it led to my witnessing the strange and weird ceremony of midnight mass, which a visitor very rarely indeed had the opportunity of doing. As a matter of fact, it was altogether unusual for a stranger to be allowed to pass the night in the monastery at all. Unlike the Great St Bernard, where I have stayed two or three times, the Chartreuse was not a show place.

On the occasion I refer to, it chanced that I was rambling in the neighbourhood of Grenoble, and as I had long yearned to learn something about the lives of the Chartreuse monks, I resolved to visit the

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monastery. Moreover, I was told that the day was not far distant when the monks would be driven forth, as they had been driven forth on a previous occasion. But then in due time they had returned ; if they were expelled again the chances were they would come back no more. This determined me to crave their hospitality, rather, if I may venture to say so, as a reverend pilgrim, instead of a visitor actuated by curiosity only. In detailing my experiences I write in the present tense, but the reader does not need to be reminded that the monks are no longer there ; and the monastery, empty and deserted, stands as a monument in the dreary mountain solitude, of the influence and tremendous power of faith over the minds of men who have shrunk from the defiling influences of the world. They now have a new monastery at Tarragona. Above the door of every cell occupied by a monk of the silent order of Carthusians, is inscribed this legend :

La vie d'un bon Chartreux doit être,
Une oraison presque continuelle.

To pray always for those who never pray, to pray for those who have done you wrong, to pray for those who sin every hour of their lives, to pray for all sorts and conditions of men, no matter what their colour, no matter what their creed, to pray that God will remove doubt and scepticism from the world, and open all human eyes to the way of faith and salvation. Such is the chief duty of the Chartreux. That the lives of these men is a continual prayer would seem to be an undoubted fact, but they are more than that

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—they are lives of silence, that must not be broken, save under exceptional circumstances. Time has been when they were surrounded by their families, their friends, when perhaps they had ambitions like other men, hopes like other men, and, it may be, have given their love to women. But then something has happened to change the current of their lives, the course of their thought: the mundane world has become distasteful, and with heavy hearts and weary feet they have sought the lonely monastery, and, having once entered, the door has closed upon them for ever. Henceforth the horizon of their world is the monastery wall; and the only sounds they will hear save the wind when it howls, or the thunder when it rolls, are the eternal tolling of the bell, and the wail and chant of the monotonous prayers. It is difficult to understand how men, young, rich, well-favoured, can seclude themselves in this busy and wonderful age; and, renouncing all the pleasures and gaiety of the world, take upon themselves solemn vows of chastity and silence, which, once taken, are devoutly kept. To God and God's service they dedicate themselves; and though on the earth, they are scarcely of it. They live as human beings, but for them it is the beginning of eternity; the passion and fret of the world will never more disturb them, and their one longing is to change the finite for the infinite. It is surely no ordinary faith that impels men to enter into a living death of this kind, nor is it fanaticism, but a devotion too deep for words, too mysterious for ordinary comprehensions to grasp.

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One must go back to the eleventh century for the beginning of the history of this strange Order. It was founded by St Bruno of Cologne, who imposed upon his votaries "Solitude," "Silence," and "Fasting." For nearly eight hundred years the Carthusians have been true to their saint, and wherever they have established themselves they have lived their lives of silence, knowing nothing of the seductive and tender influences of women, or the love and sweetness of children; dying, when their time came, without a pang of regret at leaving the world, and with nothing to perpetuate their memories, save a tiny wooden cross, on which a number is painted. But in half-a-dozen years or so the cross rots away, is never renewed, and the dead brother is referred to no more.

The lonely convent of the Grande Chartreuse is as old as the Order, although it has undergone considerable change and been extended in modern times. It is now a great building standing in a meadow, occupying a considerable extent of ground; but originally it must have been a single small house, or rather a group of small houses or cells, each one occupied by a monk. It stands in a defile, in a region of utter loneliness, which has been described as one of the most ghastly, bleak, and drear regions in all Europe, in which man has pitched his habitation. Gradually it has grown and expanded, and as if to protect it against the attacks of thieves and marauders, it is surrounded by a massive wall that is loopholed and embrasured. But why this wall was built is difficult to say,

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for these monks would never take human life, not even to save their own. So far, however, as I have been able to learn, there is no record of the convent having been seriously attacked during any period of its history. But in the Revolution of 1793 the monks were cruelly expelled, their most valuable library was destroyed, and their lawfully acquired property confiscated. They separated in little groups, and found refuge in holy houses of their Order in different parts of Europe (to them the London Charterhouse owes its origin), until the restoration of 1815—that memorable year—when they reunited and returned to their beloved monastery amid the solitude of their eternal mountains, but no longer as absolute owners of that of which they had legitimately possessed themselves. It was now the property of the State—that is, it was State plunder—and the poor monks were allowed to domicile themselves once more, subject to the payment of rent. The extensive forests round about which had been planted by the Carthusians were taken from them.

La Grande Chartreuse is situated amidst scenes of savage grandeur, 4268 feet above the sea, at the foot of the Mont Grand Som, which reaches a height of 6668 feet, and commands a view of surpassing magnificence. It is in the Department of Isère, France, and about 14 miles north from Grenoble, which is the capital of the Department, and famous for its gloves. The nearest railway station is a five hours' journey away, and there is no other human habitation within miles of the convent. The ap-

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proaches are by wild and rugged gorges, through which excellent roads have of late years been made, but formerly these gorges might have been held by a handful of men against a host. In the winter the roads are blocked with snow, and between the lonely convent and the outer world there is little communication. In summer the pine woods look solemn and dark, and the ravines are filled with the music of falling waters. There is a strange absence of bird melody, and the wind sighs weirdly among the pines and moans around the rocks. And yet the region is one of entrancing beauty, and full of a dreamy repose that conduces to a contented and restful condition of mind.

To this lonely convent I travelled one day in the late autumn, when the falling leaves spoke sadly of departed summer glories, and the shrill blasts that came down the glens were messengers from the regions of ice and snow. I had gone by train to Voiron, between Rives and Grenoble, and thence had tramped through the beautiful gorges of Crossey for five hours. The afternoon had been sullen, and bitterly cold, and the shades of night were fast falling as, weary, hungry, travel-stained, I rang the great bell at the convent gate, and begged for hospitality. A tall, cowled monk received me, but uttered no word. He merely made a sign for me to follow him, and, closing the gate and shooting the massive bolts, he led the way across a court, where I was met by another monk, who was allowed to break the rigid vow of silence so far that he could inquire of strangers what their business was. He asked me

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if I desired food and rest. On my answering in the affirmative he led me to a third and silent brother, and by him I was conducted to a cell with white-washed walls. It contained a small bed of unpainted pine wood, and a tiny table, on which was an iron basin and a jug of water. A crucifix hung on the wall, and beneath it was a *prie-dieu*. The cell was somehow suggestive of a prison, and yet I am not sure that there was as much comfort to be found in it as a prison cell affords in these humanitarian times. Everything about the Grande Chartreuse is of Spartan-like simplicity. There the body is mortified for the soul's sake, and nothing that could pander in the least degree to luxurious taste is allowed. As I was to learn afterwards, even such barren comfort as is afforded by this "Visitors' Cell" is unknown in the cells occupied by the monks.

When I had somewhat freshened myself up by a wash, I went into the corridor where my attendant was waiting, and, following him in obedience to a sign he made, I traversed a long, lofty, cold passage, with bare walls and floor. At the end of the passage there was carved in the stone the Latin inscription, *Stat crux dum volvitur orbis*. Passing through an arched doorway we reached the refectory. The great hall or supper-room was cold, barren, and dismal. Everything looked ghostly and dim in the feeble light shed by two small swinging lamps, that seemed rather to emphasise the gloom than dispel it. Comfort there was none in this echoing chamber, with its whitewashed walls and shadowy recesses, from

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which I half expected to see the spirit forms of dead monks glide. Taking my seat at a small, bare table, a silent brother placed before me a bowl of thin vegetable soup, in which some chopped eggs floated. A small piece of fish followed, then an omelette, and the whole was washed down with a bottle of common red wine of the country. It was a frugal repast, but an epicurean spread as compared with the dietary scale of the monks themselves. Meat of every kind is rigorously interdicted—that is, the flesh of animals in any form. Each brother only gets two meals a day. They consist of hot water flavoured with egg; vegetables cooked in oil; while the only drink allowed is cold water. The monks do not eat together except on Sundays and religious fête days, when they all sup in the refectory. On other days every man has his meals alone, in the solitude of his cell, and but a brief time is allowed him, for it is considered sinful to spend more time in eating and drinking than is absolutely necessary to swallow down so much food as will hold body and soul together. That men may keep themselves healthy, even on such meagre diet as that I have mentioned, is proved by the monks of the Grande Chartreuse, for they enjoy excellent health, and generally live to a green old age. Even the weak and delicate grow strong and hardy under the severe discipline. The rasping friction of the nervous system, which annually slays its tens of thousands in the outer world, is unknown here. All is calm and peaceful, and the austerity of the life led is compensated for by the abiding and hopeful

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faith. It is a brief preparation for an eternal life of unsullied joy in a world where man's sin is known no more. Surely nothing else but such a faith could sustain mortal beings under an ordeal so trying.

This strange community of Carthusians is divided into categories of "Fathers" and "Brothers." The former wear robes of white flannel, cinctured with a double girdle of hempen rope. Their heads and faces are closely shaven, and the head is generally enveloped in a cowl, which is attached to the robe. They are all ordained priests, and it is to them the rule of silence, solitude, and fasting more particularly applies. The fasting is represented by the daily bill of fare I have given, and it never varies all the year round, except on Fridays and certain days in Lent, when, poor as it is, it is still further reduced. The solitude consists of many hours spent in prayer in the loneliness of the cell, and the silence imposed is only broken by monosyllabic answers to questions addressed to them. Sustained conversation is a sin, and would be severely punished. Aspirants for the Fatherhood *must* be orphans, and they have to submit to a most trying novitiate, which lasts for five full years. Afterwards they are ordained, and from that moment renounce the world, with all its alluring temptations and its sin. Their lives henceforth must be strictly holy in accordance with the tenets of their religion. The Brothers are the manual labourers, the hewers of wood and drawers of water. They do everything that is required in the way of domestic service. They wear sandals on their bare feet, their

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bodies are clothed in a long, loose, brown robe, fastened at the waist by a rope girdle. On both branches of the Order the same severe régime is compulsory, but on Fridays the Brothers only get a morsel of black bread and a cup of cold water. The attention to spiritual duties is all-absorbing, and under no circumstances must it be relaxed. Matins commence in the chapel at twelve o'clock at night, and continue, without intermission, until daylight. But all the monks do not attend the matins at one time. While some sleep others pray. And it is doubtful if amongst the religious orders of the world anything more solemn and impressive than this midnight service could be found. To witness it was one of my chief aims in going to the convent, and so I left my cell after a short sleep, and proceeded to the chapel as the deep-toned bell struck twelve with sonorous sounds that rolled in ghostly echoes along the lofty corridors. The passage through which I made my way was a vast one, and a solitary lamp ineffectually struggled to illumine the darkness. I groped my way along until I reached a door that swung silently open to my touch. Then I stood within the chapel, where all was silent, and the place seemed steeped in Cimmerian gloom. Far in the depths of the darkness was a glimmering, starlike lamp over the altar, but its beams, feeble and straggling, revealed nothing ; only it accentuated the pitchy blackness all around. Everything was suggestive of a tomb far down in the bowels of the earth—the silence, the cold, the damp earthy smell that filled one's nostrils, all seemed to indicate decaying mortal-

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ity. Suddenly, with startling abruptness, a single voice broke into a plaintive, monotonous chant. Then others took up the cadence with a moaning wail that gradually died away until there was unbroken silence again. There was something uncanny, strange, almost appalling in this performance, for the impenetrable darkness, the starlike lamp, the wailing voices of unseen figures, seemed altogether unnatural. It begot in me a shudder that I could not repress; the moaning and wailing appeared to be associated with death rather than life. There was nothing in the whole ceremony indicative of joy or hope, but rather their converse—sadness and despair. Throughout those weary hours the wailing chant and the silence alternated. I wanted to go away, but could not. A strange fascination kept me there, and I recalled some of the wonderful descriptive scenes in Danté, which were irresistibly suggested. My imagination was wrought on to such an extent that I pictured that vast, gloomy space as filled with unquiet spirits condemned to torture; and the lamp as typical of the one ray of hope promising them that, after a long period of penance, they should pass from the horror of woe to the lightness and joy of eternal day, when their anguish would cease for ever, and rest be found. At last, to my great relief, I saw the beams of a new morn steal in at the chapel windows. The bowed forms of the cowed monks were faintly discernible, kneeling before the altar, where still burned the watch-lamp. One by one they rose and flitted away like shadows; no sound came from their foot-

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falls, no rustle from their garments. Warmly clad though I was, I shivered with the cold, and was cramped with the position I had maintained for hours ; I had been fearful of moving lest any harsh, grating noise should break in upon that solemn and impressive silence. When all had gone I, too, went, and made my way back to the cell, where I tried to snatch a few hours' sleep, but it was in vain, for my mind seemed as if it had been upset by a strange and terrible dream. Although I have had a wide and varied experience of men and manners in all parts of the world, I never witnessed such a strange scene before as I witnessed that night. It was like a nightmare picture, a poem evolved from a distorted imagination. I say a poem because it had the elements of poetry in it, but it was the poetry of ineffable human sadness.

Truly it is singular that men can so strengthen their faith, so enwrap themselves, as it were, in a gloomy creed, that they are willing to forego every pleasure in life, to shut themselves off from all that is joyous and beautiful in the world, in order to submit to an endless sorrowing for human sins ; a sorrowing that finds expression every hour of their lonely, saddened existence. From sunset to sunrise, and sunrise to sunset again, they are warned by the mournful tolling of the iron bell, every quivering stroke of which seems to say "death," to "pray without ceasing."

Many of the monks at the Grande Chartreuse are still in the very prime of their manhood, and not a few of them are members of distinguished and wealthy

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families. Yet they have renounced everything : all the advantages that influence and wealth could give them ; all the comforts of home ; the love of wife and children ; the fascination of travel and of strange sights —every temptation that this most beautiful world could hold out has been resisted, and they have dedicated themselves to gloom, fasting, and silence. Verily, human nature is an unfathomable mystery. One may well ask if these monks are truly happy ? If they have no longings for the flesh-pots of Egypt ? If they do not sometimes pine and sigh for the busy haunts and the excitement of the great towns ? Such questions are not easily answered, unless we get the answer in the fact that the monastic vows are faithfully and religiously kept ; and there is no record of a Carthusian monk ever having broken his vow. Surely then there must be something strangely, even terribly attractive in that stern life, which is so full of hardship and trial, and from year's end to year's end knows no change, until the *denoûtement* which comes to us all, sooner or later, whether we be monks or revellers.

I have already mentioned that, notwithstanding their sparse and meagre diet, which seems to us ordinary mortals to lack nutriment and sustaining power, the monks of the Grande Chartreuse are healthy and vigorous. The Brothers labour in their fields and gardens, and they cultivate all the vegetables that they use, as well as grow most of their own corn for the bread. They do any bricklaying, carpentering, or painting that may be required, as well

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as all the washing and mending of the establishment, for a woman is never allowed to enter the sacred precincts. The furniture of each cell consists of a very narrow bed as hard as a board, and with little covering; a small stove, for the rigours of the climate render a fire indispensable at times, and yet the fires are used but sparingly; a little basin, with a jug of water for ablutions; and of course there is the *prie-dieu* and the image of a saint. Attached to the convent is a cemetery, which cannot fail to have a very melancholy interest for the visitor. It is divided into two parts, one being for the Fathers, the other for the Brothers, for as the two branches of the Order are kept distinct in life, so they are separated in death. No mounds mark the last resting-places of the quiet sleepers; but at the head of each is a wooden cross, though it bears no indication of the name, age, or date of death of the deceased—only a number. Having played his little part and returned to the dust from whence he sprang, it is considered meet that the Carthusian should be forgotten. The cross is merely an indication that beneath moulder the remains of what was once a man.

As is well known, the monks distil the famous liqueur which finds its way to all parts of the world, and yields a very handsome revenue. The process of its concoction is an inviolable secret, but it is largely composed of herbs, carnations, as I have heard, and young tips of the pines, steeped in cognac. It is said that the recipe was brought to the convent

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by one of the Fathers, who had been expelled in 1792, and that at first the liqueur was used as a medicine and distributed amongst the poor. In the course of time, however, it was improved upon, for its fame having spread, a demand for it sprang up, and it was resolved to make it an article of commerce. For this purpose a separate building was erected apart from the monastery, and placed in charge of one of the Fathers, who has a staff of Brothers under him. The basis of the liqueur is supposed to be an indigenous mountain herb combined with the petals of certain wild flowers, including, as I have said, the carnation. These are macerated with sugar until fermentation takes place. The liquid is then refined, and brandy is added. Formerly it was made without brandy. The "green" is most favoured by connoisseurs, and its exquisite, delicate fragrance and flavour have never been rivalled. More care is bestowed upon the "green" than the "yellow," which is somewhat inferior in quality and of a coarser flavour. On several occasions very large sums have been offered for the right to manufacture the chartreuse by financial speculators, but all such offers have met with resolute refusals. Although I believe that the greater part of the income of the convent is spent in deeds of charity, it may be doubted by some people whether it is not a somewhat questionable way for a religious Order to augment its funds by the preparation of an intoxicating liqueur for which, according to their own doctrine, there is absolutely no need. The chartreuse has a strong rival in the well-known benedictine, made by

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the Benedictine Monks ; which, while being very similar in character, is said by some to be superior. That, however, is a mere matter of opinion I think, though I have heard it said the chartreuse has the larger sale of the two. Many attempts have been made from time to time to imitate both these liqueurs, but without success, and the exact secret of their decoction is as religiously preserved as are the secrets of Freemasonry.

Like the Great St Bernard, the Grande Chartreuse, though not to the same extent by a long way, attracts a certain number of visitors in the summer, who regard it as a sort of show place. It would be a cruel injustice, however, to let it be supposed that the Chartreux had the slightest desire to make an exhibition of their lonely convent. But the travelling facilities afforded the tripper nowadays enable him to penetrate to the remotest recesses of the earth. No place is sacred to him ; what he lacks in intelligence he makes up for by vulgarity ; and as he thinks nothing of going into a Continental theatre dressed in a tweed suit, so he does not hesitate, garbed in hob-nailed boots and knickerbockers, to demand entrance into the Grande Chartreuse, whose mystery he does not understand and cares naught for, and whose solemnity does not awe him. To refuse hospitality even to the irreverent curiosity-monger would be contrary to the Carthusian's creed, which teaches charity to all men, and to "turn no deaf ear to him who asks for bread and succour." And so anything of the masculine gender is admitted and fed with the frugal fare

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that is now specially provided for visitors ; and very properly he who partakes of this hospitality, not being in actual want of it, is required to pay for his entertainment by contributing to the poor-box. But only under most exceptional circumstances is a visitor allowed to pass the night under the roof of the convent, therefore that strange and ghostly service in the chapel during the hours of darkness is rarely witnessed, and that fact has induced me to record my own experience. The Grande Chartreuse boasts of a magnificent library, which numbers upwards of 20,000 volumes, for the most part of a theological nature. Many of these books are unique and of great age, and to the theological student would probably prove a mine of wealth. Amongst the volumes are some very rare Bibles and prayer-books of nearly every civilised country in the world. This library replaces the one that was destroyed at the time of the Revolution, and has been collected during the present century.

What is known as the Chapter-room is an exception to the rest of the place, inasmuch as it is hung with portraits of the Father Superiors from the very foundation of the Order. There are about fifty of these portraits altogether, and some of the earlier ones are more curious than artistic. The "Superiors" are the only men of the Order whose memory is thus kept alive.

The Grand Cloister is the largest apartment in the building. It is a not quite perfect square, and is lighted by a hundred and thirty windows. A portion of this cloister dates back to the early part of the

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thirteenth century. There are two main corridors seven hundred and twenty-two feet long, and abutting on these corridors are the cells, about sixty in number. There is also a Chapelle des Morts, built about the end of the thirteenth century. Here the bodies of the dead monks rest during the religious services that are held over them before they are finally consigned to the little cemetery to which I have already made reference. Nor must I forget to mention what is known as the Map-room, where there is a very valuable collection of maps of different parts of the world, but particularly of France. There is also a small museum of insects and butterflies indigenous to the mountains of the region in which the convent is situated. That region is the southern group of the singularly interesting limestone Alps of Savoy, and the convent stands in about the middle section of the group which culminates in the Pointe de Chamchaude, 6845 feet high.

In choosing the site for the convent, there is little doubt that isolation as well as a position of natural defence were aimed at. Isolated it truly is, and up to a couple of hundred years ago it must have been absolutely impregnable. But it is well known that the monks of old had an eye also to beauty of surroundings, and it is doubtful if the faithful followers of St Bruno could have found a site commanding a view of more magnificent beauty in all France than that which the Grande Chartreuse occupies, and by ascending to the summit of the Grand Som, which throws its shadow over the convent, a panorama of

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unsurpassed grandeur is unfolded to the wondering gaze. To the west it embraces the valley of the Rhône, the town of Lyons, and the mountains of Ardèche and Forez ; to the east the chain of glittering Alps that stretches from Mont Visio to Mont Blanc ; to the north is the Mont de Chat of Chambéry, the Lake of Bourget, and that part of the Rhône Valley which is bounded by the rugged peaks of the purple Jura, while to the south are smiling valleys and rolling uplands.

This view of the outer world is all the monks ever obtain, for, having once taken the vows, they leave the convent no more ; and they know little of what goes on in the busy haunts of men, where the passion of life reaches fever heat, save what they gather from the chattering of the throngs of summer idlers. In winter they live in a silent, white world, and the face of a stranger is very rarely seen.

Before leaving the neighbourhood I paid a visit to the Chapelle de St Bruno, which is within half-an-hour's walk of the monastery. It is erected in a very wild spot, said to be the site of the saint's original hermitage. There is nothing particularly interesting in the chapel, which is in a state of dilapidation. But it is curious to speculate that here dwelt, in what was little more than a cavern, the man who, by the austerity of his life and his gloomy views, was able to found a religious Order which has endured for many ages, and is one of the few that escaped destruction during the revolutions and upheavals of the last century. The situation of the Chapelle is one of

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singular loneliness and desolation, and for eight months at least, of the year it is buried in snow.

As I turned my back upon the Grande Chartreuse, after that memorable night spent under its roof, and feeling grateful for the shelter and refreshment it had afforded me, the morning sun was gilding the glorious landscape, and I breathed a sigh of relief and gladness, for I seemed to have come from a region of sorrow and gloom, where the coldness of death was ever present, into the healthy, joyous life of the throbbing, breathing world, with all its wickedness and beauty, but a human world.

Curiously enough, at a later period I was again the guest of Carthusian monks, but under very different circumstances. I was for long a member of the Mont Blanc section of the French Alpine Club, and on one occasion, in company with some brother members, made a climbing expedition among the Alpes Maritimes. Subsequently we tramped into Provence on our way to Marseilles, where we were to be entertained by the Provence Section of the Club. In Provence we visited what is known as the "Grotto de Ste Baume," situated high up in the face of a cliff, reached by a nerve-trying ledge path cut in the rock. The Grotto is a huge natural cavern in which there are an altar and chapel, and a natural well of holy water. To this place pilgrims and enthusiasts come to worship in the gloom and icy coldness of the dripping cave. Far below is a monastery of the Order of the Carthusians. There we were entertained by the monks, the repast being presided over by as jolly a

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monk as one could imagine. His flannel robe and the rope round his waist were in strange contrast to his rubicund face, ever wreathed with smiles, and his rotund figure, which seemed to proclaim him anything but an ascetic. This monk was a scholar and a gentleman, and, I was assured, a man of exemplary holiness of life.

Towards the end of 1902 I sailed for the West Indies on a special mission. I spent Christmas Day of that year at sea, and was reminded of the many Christmases I had spent under ever varying conditions of climate and circumstance. I had a delightful time in the sunlit land of Jamaica, and returned home in the early summer of 1903. I was to have gone out again, but that very year a hurricane devastated a portion of the island, and my journey was postponed *sine die*, and now as I write comes the news of the destruction of Kingston by a terrible earthquake. To me it is fraught with painful interest, for I have many friends there, and I have kept in touch with the island. In my opinion, Jamaica is one of the most beautiful spots in the world, with a winter climate that is perfection. To attempt to describe its beauty by mere verbal description would be to fail to do it justice, and it is sad to think that such a calamity should have fallen upon it at a time when a new prosperity was dawning. There is one consolation, however, Nature will soon repair the damage she herself has caused, and I have too much faith in the energy and pluck of the Jamaicans to believe that they will sit with folded hands mourning over the

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ruins of their chief town. Kingston will rise from its ashes speedily, and though there has been a set back to the island's prosperity, it can only be temporary. The glorious climate and magnificent scenery will assuredly continue to attract visitors and health seekers in the future as they have done in the past. The voyage there from England is a delightful one, and many a despairing invalid who has undertaken it has returned reinvigorated, and with a new lease of life. Although Port Royal was destroyed by the great earthquake of 1692, when there was an enormous loss of life, there has not, so far as I know, been a serious earthquake until the present one. And though our poor old earth seems to have gone a bit crazy during the last few years, she will probably quieten down again ere long, and the wreck and ruin her throes and upheavals have caused will become merely memories; while on the Pacific Coast and in the Caribbean Sea, where there are now ruin and sorrow, tens of thousands of poor mortals will thank God for the blessing of life and the beauty of His most wonderful world.

Since my return from Jamaica my wanderings have carried me no farther than a hundred miles or so from London, and I am afraid I must recognise the fact that my travel days are over. I came within an ace of going to the Congo not long ago, but the negotiations fell through at the last moment, as I did not feel myself free to accept the conditions that were sought to be imposed upon me.

There is yet one other personal matter I want to

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refer to before finishing my task of writing this book. It is now pretty widely known that many of my works have been issued under the pen name of "Dick Donovan," but how I came to adopt that *nom de guerre* is only known to a few, and for years I kept the secret well that I was Dick Donovan. When in Dundee I began to write for the Messrs Thomson a series of stories, the interest of which centred round the unravelling of complicated cases of crime, and as I wanted a pen name, I selected that of a Bow Street runner who flourished some time in the eighteenth century. When I began these stories I had no intention of continuing them beyond a certain number which I had determined beforehand; but their success was beyond anything that had been anticipated. The first series was revised for book publication and was issued in one volume by Messrs Chatto & Windus, under the title of "The Man Hunter," and from that moment my fate was sealed. I could not turn back; I was lured on by the cheque-book. I freely confess my weakness, and hope I may be forgiven.

One day, soon after Chatto & Windus had published the third or fourth book, I forget which it was, I went into the Savage Club, and met the late Henri Van Laun, a very distinguished literary man and linguist. I was intimate with him, and therefore had no hesitation, on seeing a volume projecting from the pocket of a short jacket he was wearing, in drawing the book out, and looking at it; to my surprise I found it was a work by Dick Donovan, and as I knew that Van Laun

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reviewed for a "High-Class" sixpenny weekly, I was interested.

"What are you doing with this?" I asked.

"It has just been given to me by my editor for review. By the way, who is the idiot who writes under that name?"

"I don't know any idiot of that name," I answered, with a sweet and blandlike expression of countenance. And was I not right? for though I have visited Earlswood, the authorities did not detain me.

"Well, I'm going to smash his book," said Van joyfully.

"Why?"

"Why! because such bally trash as that ought not to be printed. If I had my way I would order all such books to be burnt by the public hangman."

"What a pity you can't have your own way. It would be a splendid advertisement for the author. But how do you know it's trash? You haven't read it."

"No; and don't intend to. Such piffle doesn't appeal to me."

"Then I suppose you are no admirer of Gaboriau, De Boisgobey, and other writers of the same class?"

"Admire them; no, certainly not. To me it's a hateful kind of literature."

"Well, you pulverise that fellow?" I remarked as I handed him back the book.

"I intend to do so," was his answer.

And he did. Two or three weeks later the poor little volume was slated in his paper.

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Long afterwards I went to visit my poor friend when he was nearing his end. He was propped up with water cushions in a large chair, and as I entered the room he shook his fist at me, and exclaimed :

"You villain, why didn't you tell me you were Dick Donovan? I only learnt it a few days ago from old Jones, who came to see me. And only to think that the slating I gave you hasn't stopped you from writing more. The fact is, you do it for the sake of filthy lucre ; you know you do. You are incorrigible."

I assured him that he had accurately gauged the depth of my awful depravity, and that I was past praying for.

With a wan smile he added :

"A good job for you that I haven't long to live. As it is, I give you my blessing. Go on and prosper."

A few weeks later Henri Van Laun was dead, and I lost another dear friend. There used to be a good story told of Van Laun apropos to his extraordinary gifts as a linguist. He was travelling on the Continent, when a very young man and a very young lady got into the compartment of the railway train he was occupying. They were a newly married couple, and began to say the most endearing things to each other in French. Presently Van informed them that as he understood French, they might like to be a little more reserved. The lady blushed, the gentleman bowed politely, and he and his wife conversed in German. The same thing happened. They tried Italian, Spanish, Portugese, even Polish, but each time Laun assured them that he understood their conver-

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sation. Then the bridegroom lost his temper, and exclaimed :

"One of two things is certain, sir, either you are Henri Van Laun or the devil." And he and his bride changed carriages at the next station.

Coming back to my Donovan work, I think the Catalogues of the British Museum would show a list of between forty and fifty volumes under that name. And I do not think it is an exaggeration for me to say that the sales of these works in the aggregate have run into large figures. The books have been translated into various languages, including the Tamil of India, Swedish, and Russian. In connection with these works I have received many hundreds of letters from all parts of the world. The writers for the most part being under the impression that "Dick Donovan" was a real detective. In one instance a lady wrote to me from Brighton where she was temporarily staying, and begged that I would place my services at her disposal to shadow her husband, whom she suspected of being not quite as good as he ought to be. He had recently gone out to New Zealand, where he had some business connections, and she wished me to follow him. She informed me that she was wealthy, and I could name my own fee. I need hardly say that I did not feel myself free to accept her generous offer.

On another occasion a funny little incident happened. I was travelling to Holyhead, when two gentlemen occupying the same compartment were discussing the murder of a young woman on the London and South-

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Western Railway and the failure of the police to bring the criminal to justice. "The fact is," said one gentleman, "they haven't got a man at Scotland Yard worth his salt. Now I know a fellow who would precious soon get on the track of the brute who killed that girl."

"Who is that?" asked his companion.

"Dick Donovan, the man who has written a lot of works."

"But he's not a detective."

"Oh, I beg your pardon. He was for years in the secret service of the Russian Government."

As it was news to me that I had been in the Russian Government Service, I ventured to remark that I had read all Dick Donovan's works, and thought he was a mere story writer.

"His stories are written from experience, sir," said gentleman No. 1 with emphatic decisiveness. "Besides I happen to know for a fact that he *was* with the Russian Government."

"That is most interesting," I remarked. "Are you acquainted with Donovan?"

"No; but a friend of mine, a member of my club, knows him very well, and told me."

"Would you have any objection to telling me your friend's name?"

"Why?" demanded my fellow-traveller somewhat sternly, as though he suspected me of nefarious designs against his friend.

"The truth is I happen to know Mr Donovan pretty well myself, and I've never heard him make any reference to his services with the Russian Government."

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"Very likely that is due to his modesty. Anyway, my friend is intimately acquainted with him, and therefore I must accept his information as correct."

"But I am also acquainted with Donovan," I urged, and nearly added "I am Donovan." But my fellow-passenger looked at me with a look full of meaning, and with biting irony replied :

"So you say, sir," with such a decided accent on the "you" that I thought it better policy to hold my peace. He was a big man, and seemed determined.

Some time after that I was visiting the Black Museum at Scotland Yard in company with a party of friends. A policeman had been told off to explain the various exhibits to us, when one of my friends asked, addressing the guide :

"By the way, do you know Dick Donovan?"

"What, the Russian spy?"

"No; I mean the writer."

"Oh, I beg your pardon——"

"Well, let him speak for himself. This *is* Dick Donovan." I blushed, and bowed. Our conductor seemed a little confused for the moment, and then with a smile of incredulity said :

"Good joke of yours, sir, but it won't wash."

I tried to convince him that I was really the person known as Dick Donovan, but a wag of the party chipped in with the remark :

"Don't you believe him, policeman; he's trying to have you; he wants to pull your leg." One of the man's eyes half closed, and his face was a study in its expression of self-assurance as he replied :

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"I think, sir, he would have to get up pretty early in the morning to have me. I ain't so easily taken in as all that."

"I am sure you are not," said the wag, "and I am sure my friend here (meaning me) would have no chance with you." Then addressing me with assumed sternness, he added: "Look here, Muddock, old chap, you'll get yourself into trouble one of these days if you persist in your attempt to pass as Dick Donovan. And to try it on in Scotland Yard above all places in the world is rather risky, you know."

Since the two little incidents here recorded I have had further evidence of the existence of a belief that Dick Donovan was at one time in the employment of the Russian Government, and I can only account for it by the fact that years ago I published a volume through Chatto & Windus under the title of "The Chronicles of Michael Danevitch," the scenes of the various tales being laid in Russia.

The measure of success which has attended the work I have done under the *nom de guerre* is due, I venture to suppose, at anyrate to some extent, to its *vraisemblance*. I have carefully avoided making the protagonist a self-conscious and impossible prig, and in nearly every instance the basis of my plots has been recorded facts.

It is not a little curious that stories of mystery and stories of crime should have such a fascination for all sorts and conditions of people. And in every civilised country there are writers who make a name for themselves by that particular class of literature. Superior

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persons may tilt their noses at it as much as they like, but the fact remains, and it is safe to predict that it will remain for all time. The late Prince Bismarck was a lover of the so-called detective story, and I happen to know that he eagerly read that class of literature in preference to any other. In the course of my wanderings I have often seen detective stories in houses where I have least expected them, and not long ago a well-known archdeacon assured me that he derived a great deal of pleasure from the perusal of stories of that kind. Notwithstanding this testimony to the popularity of detective fiction, I have never been in full sympathy with my Donovan work. Over and over again I have expressed a determination of doing no more, but the voice of the publisher has rung in my ears to my undoing, and every writer knows how sweet and persuasive the publisher can be. And then his cheque-book is a thing to conjure with. Oh, that awful cheque-book! A humble individual like myself who has to scribble for his bread and cheese must be iron-willed indeed if he can turn a deaf ear to his publisher's blandishments, the while his butcher and baker and candlestick maker are clamouring for their little accounts. These worthy representatives of trade have a very poor opinion, I am afraid, of the writers of books or painters of pictures. A friend of mine, a clever painter, but lacking commercial instincts, happened to owe his butcher a paltry hundred or so. One evening, when the painter was enjoying his humble chop and a pint of excellent burgundy, his waiting-maid announced the arrival of

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the butcher, who said he "must see the master." "Show him in," was the command, and in a few moments there entered the gentleman of meat, who was also a meaty gentleman, for he weighed sixteen stones. He was smoking a villainous cigar, and seemed rather uneasy at so suddenly and unexpectedly finding himself face to face with his debtor. He had come to storm and rage ; he remained to be appeased.

"What can I do for you, Mr Aitchbone?" asked the painter sweetly as he continued his supper with the utmost unconcern.

"Well, sir, you see it's this way. I have a heavy bill against you, and I'd like to have a bit on account."

"Sit down, sit down, Mr Aitchbone," said my friend, with a graceful wave of his delicate hand. "I hope Mrs Aitchbone and the Misses Aitchbone are well. By the way, I didn't see any of you in church last Sunday."

The butcher opened his eyes.

"I didn't know, sir, as 'ow you went to our church."

"I don't ; that's why I didn't see you. But you were there, of course ?"

"Oh yes ; me and the missus and the gals goes regular like."

"Ah, it's most creditable, most creditable ; shows you are good Christian people, and can be merciful to the poor. Now, what can I offer you?"

"Well, if you could let me have a cheque for fifty on account——"

"No, no ; I mean what will you drink?"

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"Nothink, thank you, sir. I never takes anythink except a little ale with my meals."

"Well now, let's be sensible, Mr Aitchbone. You see, you are a successful butcher ; I am only an artist——"

"More's the pity, sir, more's the pity, sir," exclaimed the butcher, "'cos yer ain't a bad sort ; but hartists and hauthors is a poor lot—they never does any good for theirselves."

"In what way? What do you know about them?"

"Well, sir, my father was a hartist, and I 'ad to keep him, and I 'ad a brother as use to write books, and he was always a borrowing money of me. Hartists and hauthors ain't of much use in the world, sir. They're so unbusiness-like."

Mr Aitchbone's views of literature and art are, I fancy, the views of a very large section of the community, who regard the accumulation of money as the only thing worth living for ; while authors and artists are looked upon rather as encumbrances, and though by the grace of God and the will of the people they are allowed to roam at large, they are regarded as being more than a little mad. For myself, I *had* to write ; in my own modest way I have managed to keep the wolf from the door, and have seen something of the world, which possibly I should not have been able to do had I been a tradesman. My literary tastes have always inclined to historical subjects ; but, unfortunately, the cry goes up of "Historical Novels don't pay," and it rather disheartens one. Notwithstanding, I have had a small measure of success in that direction.

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In these days of rush and stress and keen competition, when one's cook and maid of all work write for the papers, authorship is by no means a profession that should be lightly chosen. The work is hard ; the disappointments many ; the prizes singularly few, unless sinking all self-respect, and ignoring the dignity of letters, you blatantly proclaim yourself from the house-tops.

He or she who will do that persistently and on every conceivable occasion can defy criticism and live in clover. Happily, however, the majority of writers, whatever their station, whatever their status, are content to be judged purely by their merits, and are thankful for such small mercies as may be vouchsafed to them. The consciousness of duty done faithfully, and to the best of one's ability, in whatever calling one finds work to do, gives a sweetness to life, and brings a feeling of independence that is better than riches. In my own case, I have laboured persistently ; the record of my industry is to be found in the list of books which stands to my credit. I have not set the Thames or any other river on fire, but I have done something to amuse and entertain those who read, and I venture most fervently to hope that no one can charge me with ever having written anything that hadn't to a greater or lesser extent a wholesome tendency. Nor have I set myself up as a teacher. I leave the manyisms and the problems to clever people. Long ago I recognised my limitations, and have been content to remain a humble plodder, thankful that I have been allowed to live ; thankful for the many

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precious friendships it has been my good fortune to enjoy ; thankful for the philosophy which has enabled me to make the best of things, and to accept my fate cheerfully as it has come to me ; and specially thankful for the health and strength with which I have been blessed, and for the opportunities afforded me of seeing so much of this beautiful world.

My life may to some people seem commonplace enough, but at least it has been varied ; and if my story lacks picturesqueness and importance, it may perchance possess a psychological interest as illustrating the hereditary tendencies of temperament. The dislike to be bound by any hard and fast rules of mere conventionalism, and the restless spirit which has kept me moving on, have been marked characteristics of many members of my family on both sides. The love of adventure has also been strong within them, as it has been in me, and to its possession I owe some dramatic moments in my career and one or two episodes that are not without interest. If there is one virtue to which I dare lay claim, it is a strong sense of duty ; and I have endeavoured, humbly and modestly, to do my duty as I have understood it, in spite of difficulty, even of risk. To associate with men of prominence, men of information, from whom I could learn something, has ever been my aim ; and to this fact I owe much of the pleasure I have got out of life, while it has led to many close and treasured friendships, which have stood the test of time.

In bringing this narrative of my wandering career

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to a close, I am painfully conscious of its defects. I undertook it, somewhat lightly I am afraid, but as my task has proceeded I have felt the difficulty of writing about myself without seeming to be egotistical. That very difficulty has caused me to shrink from telling many things that I might have told. All I can hope is that my faults, and my sins of omission and commission, whatever they be, will be weighed lightly, and that these rambling notes may prove to have some interest for my readers.

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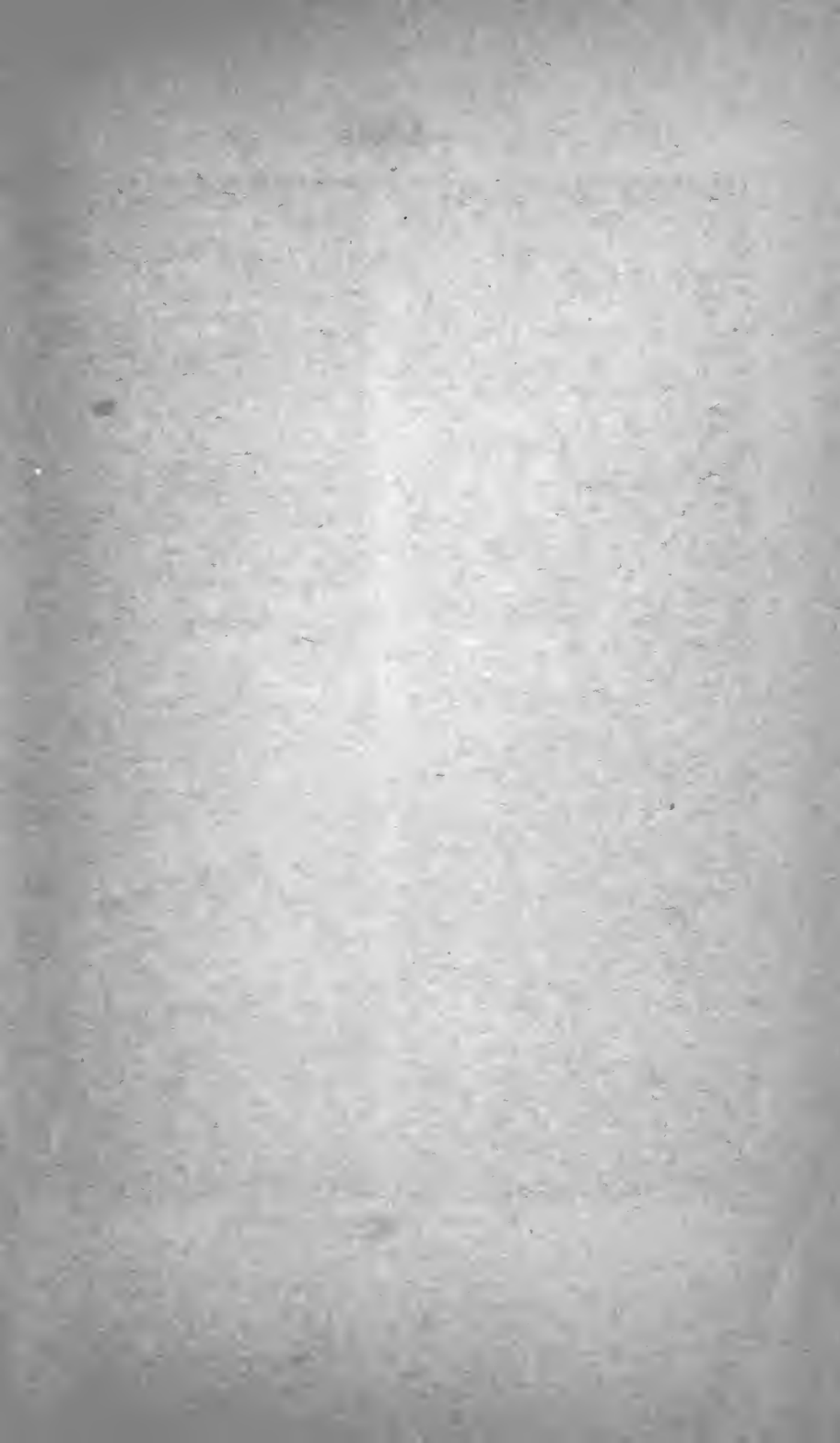
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